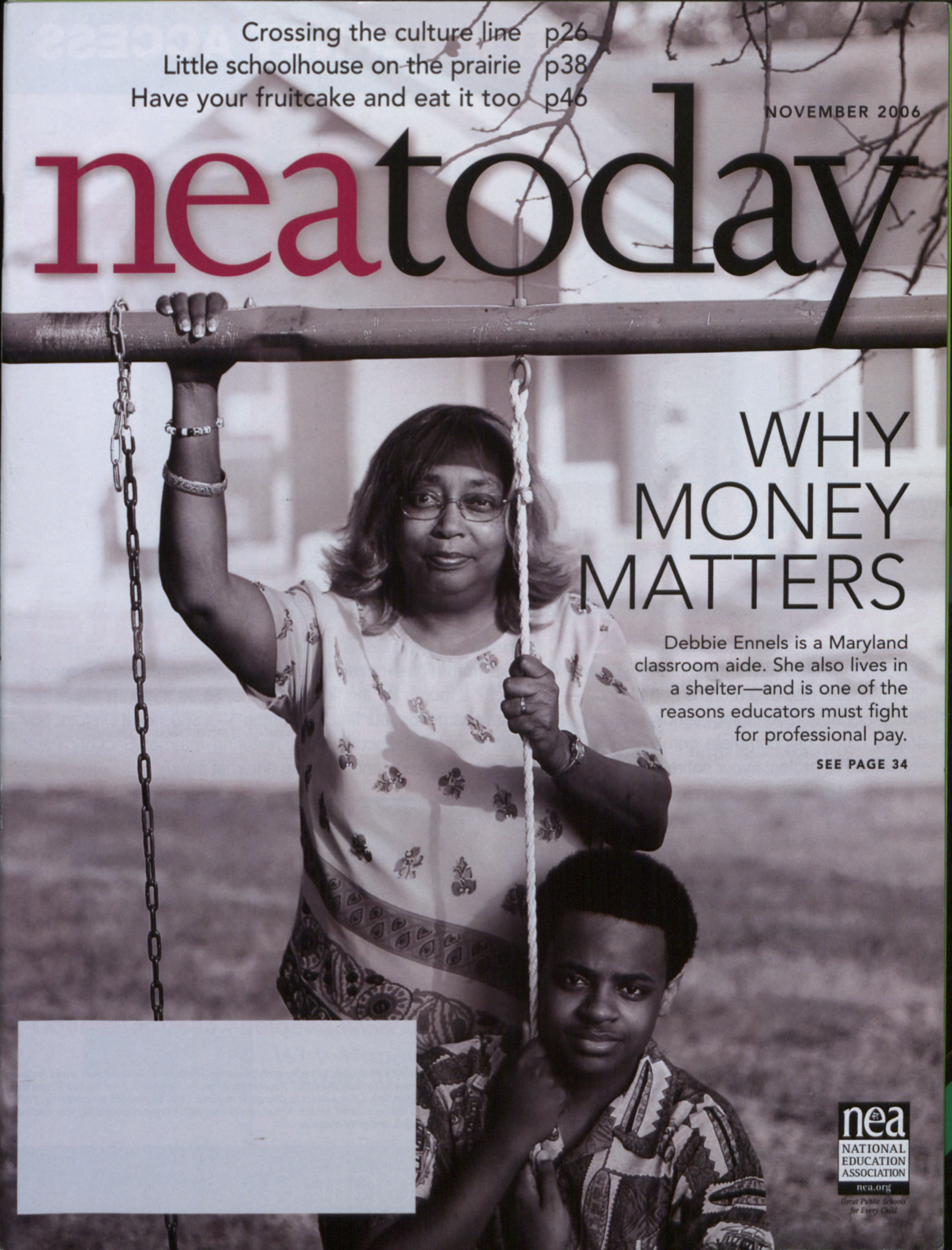
Crossing the culture line p26
Little schoolhouse on the prairie p38
Have your fruitcake and eat it too p46

NOVEMBER 2006

neatoday



WHY MONEY MATTERS

Debbie Ennels is a Maryland classroom aide. She also lives in a shelter—and is one of the reasons educators must fight for professional pay.

SEE PAGE 34

nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

Special Offer

UNLIMITED INTERNET ACCESS

First 3 months half-price

$4.97 a month*

Special NEA Member Rate!

PeoplePC Online offers the features you would expect from higher-priced Internet Service Providers for a special NEA Member rate of 3 months at half price — only $4.97 a month for the first 3 months, $9.95 a month thereafter. Plus, Accelerator technology is now included at NO extra charge for your first 12 months**—a $60 value! Or, for a few dollars more, get complete computer protection with PeoplePC Security Plus featuring Internet Security Pack software that protects your entire computer against viruses, spyware, and phishing (Internet fraud).

Surf up to 5x faster† with FREE Accelerator** at no additional cost	Email Virus Protection	Pop-Up Blocker™	Spam Controls	*Smarter* Smart Dialer Technology	More Email Addresses	Internet Call Waiting

Sign Up Today! 1-888-5TRY-NOW

Mention Offer Code: **SCHOOL7** Or visit **www.peoplepc.com/go/school7**

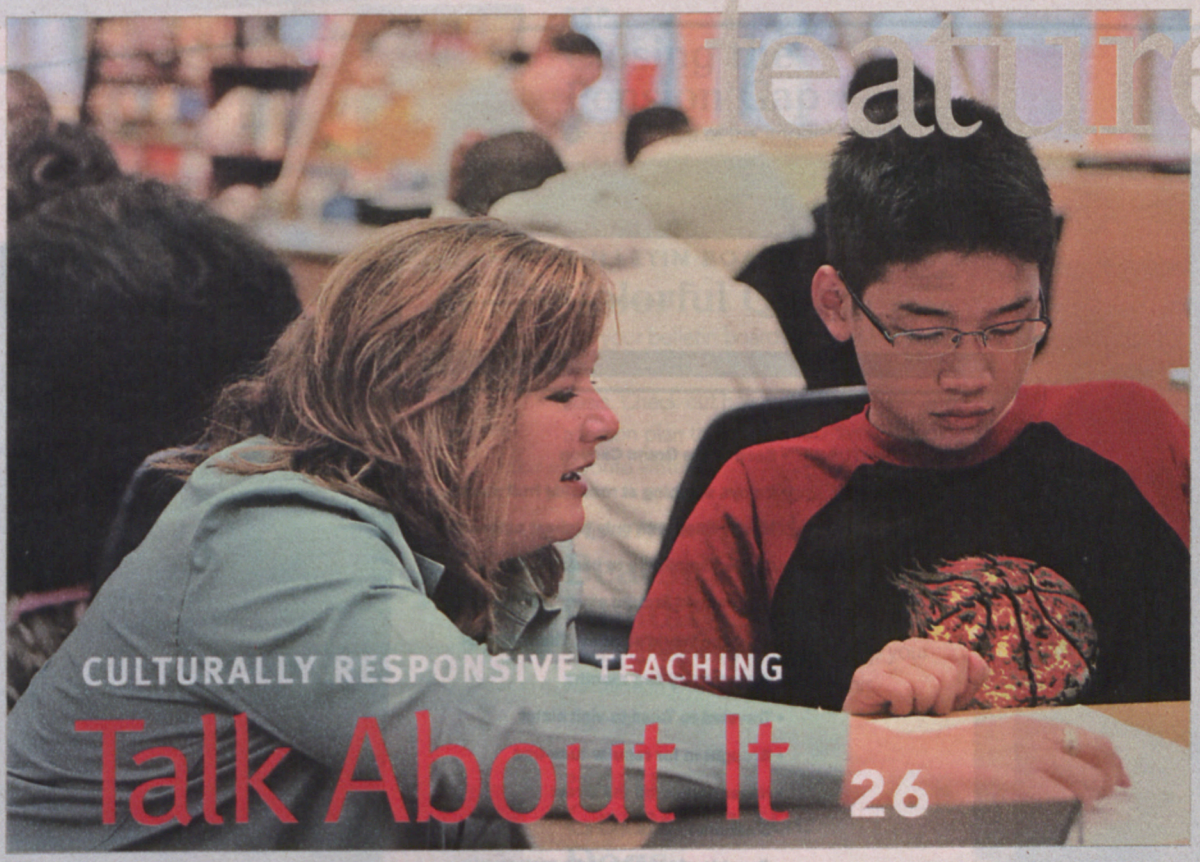
*PeoplePC Online: First 3 months $4.97/month, $9.95/month thereafter. PeoplePC Security Plus: First 3 months $6.46/month; $12.95/month thereafter. Service not available in all areas. Access fees, taxes and other restrictions may apply. Phone technical support available for $1.95 per minute. Technical support by email is FREE. **Accelerator is free for 12 months. After the first 12 months, the Accelerated service will automatically revert to the standard PeoplePC Online service. Offer good for limited time. Offer subject to change at anytime. Offer for new subscribers only. †With PeoplePC Online Accelerated, certain Web page text and graphics will load faster when compared to standard dial-up Internet service. Actual results may vary. Certain compatibility specifications apply. © 2006 PeoplePC Inc. All Rights Reserved. PeoplePC and its logos are trademarks of PeoplePC in the U.S.A. and other countries.

peoplepc™ online

NOVEMBER

> VOLUME 25 > NUMBER 3 > 2006

features



CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Talk About It 26

Race and poverty can be powerful reference points to reach students from all backgrounds, but educators must first reach beyond their comfort zones. To learn how, we visit a school in Seattle that's embraced culturally responsive teaching in a big way.

STUDENT GARDENS

Taking Root 32

Do your students cheer for broccoli? One California district uses gardening to help cultivate green thumbs and healthy habits.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Something to Talk About 25

As more states adopt English-only education laws, the ways in which teachers connect with English-language learners is often getting lost in translation.

WHERE WE TEACH

Pioneer Spirit 38

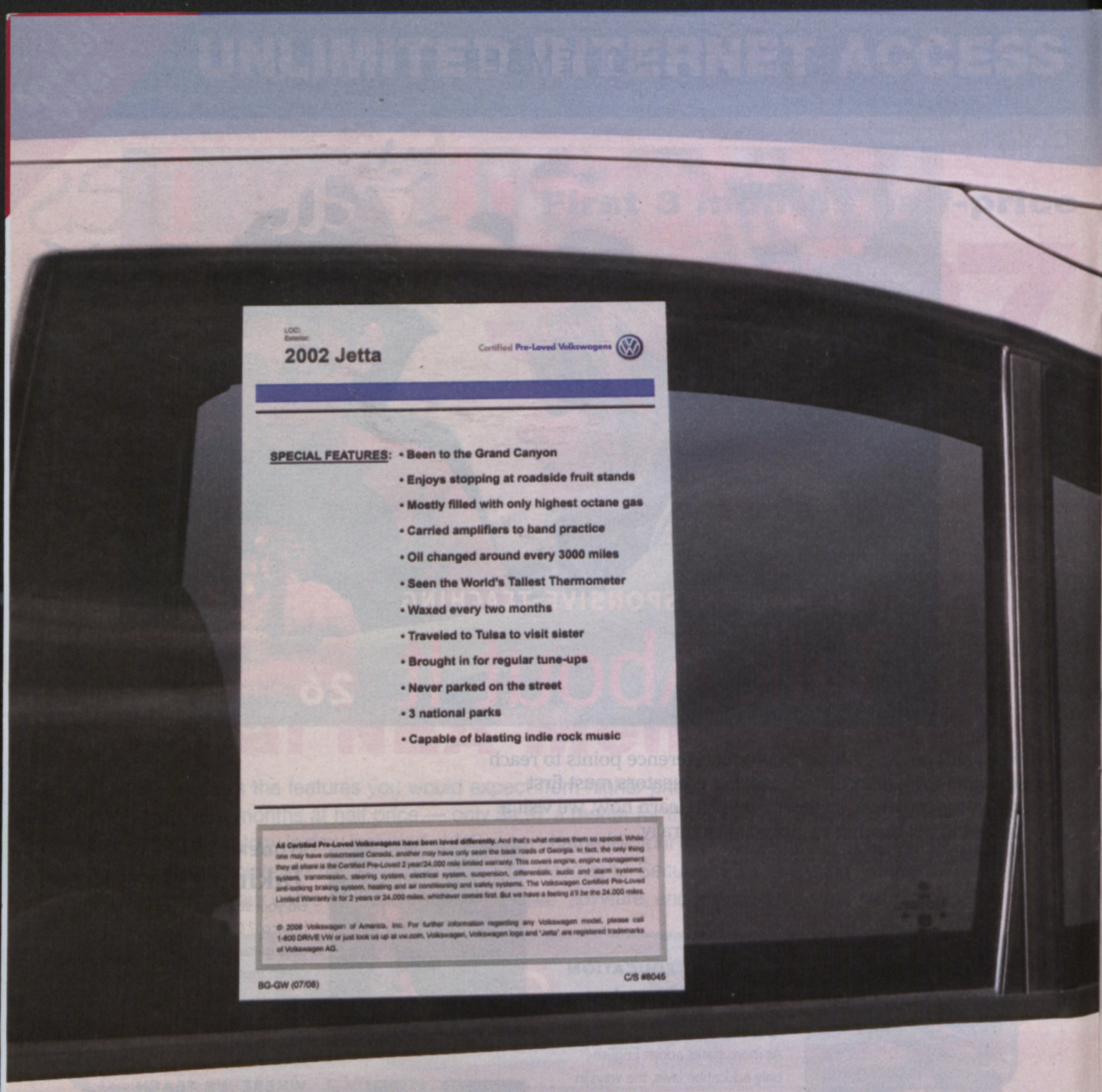
A two-room school has been at the heart of rural Baldwin, North Dakota, for nearly 100 years. If the school is forced to close, will the town survive?

PROFESSIONAL PAY

Why Money Matters 34

Despite sacrifices and second jobs, it's still tough to make ends meet. Meet six hard-working educators who deserve professional pay.

PHOTO TOP: JIM BRYANT; SMALL PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER RIGHT: JEFF FASSETT, NANCY KUEHN, D. KEVIN ELLIOTT, JEFF TOPPING


LOC:
Exterior:
2002 Jetta
Certified Pre-Loved Volkswagens
SPECIAL FEATURES:
• Been to the Grand Canyon
• Enjoys stopping at roadside fruit stands
• Mostly filled with only highest octane gas
• Carried amplifiers to band practice
• Oil changed around every 3000 miles
• Seen the World's Tallest Thermometer
• Waxed every two months
• Traveled to Tulsa to visit sister
• Brought in for regular tune-ups
• Never parked on the street
• 3 national parks
• Capable of blasting indie rock music
All Certified Pre-Loved Volkswagens have been loved differently. And that's what makes them so special. While one may have crisscrossed Canada, another may have only seen the back roads of Georgia. In fact, the only thing they all share is the Certified Pre-Loved 2 year/24,000 mile limited warranty. This covers engine, engine management system, transmission, steering system, electrical system, suspension, differentials, audio and alarm systems, anti-locking braking system, heating and air conditioning and safety systems. The Volkswagen Certified Pre-Loved Limited Warranty is for 2 years or 24,000 miles, whichever comes first. But we have a feeling it'll be the 24,000 miles.
© 2006 Volkswagen of America, Inc. For further information regarding any Volkswagen model, please call 1-800 DRIVE VW or just look us up at vw.com. Volkswagen, Volkswagen logo and "Jetta" are registered trademarks of Volkswagen AG.
BG-GW (07/06)
C/S #8045

Volkswagen owners love their cars more than other drivers. Whether it's changing the oil or sharing a trip to see a fun part of the world. That's why we call them Pre-Loved Volkswagens. Of course, every one of them has to pass our 112-point inspection to be certified. And we back it with a 2-year/24,000 mi. limited warranty. And to top it all off we're even giving teachers the special APR of only 3.9%*. So, it's easier than ever to get a Certified Pre-Loved Volkswagen. So head down to your local VW dealer, we think you'll fall in love with one yourself.

Certified Pre-Loved Volkswagens

©2006 Volkswagen of America, Inc. *The Special APR rate is available on 2007, 06 and 05 GTI, Jetta, New Beetle, Beetle Convertible, Golf and Rabbit models. 60 month financing available to approved credit through Volkswagen Credit. Example: For every $1,000 financed over 60 months, $17.92 is due. Down payment may be required. Visit your local Volkswagen dealer and use your AAA membership to take advantage of this offer. Supplies limited. Offer ends December 31, 2006. See dealer for details.

NOVEMBER

> VOLUME 25 > NUMBER 3 > 2006

ESP

Closing the Pension Gap 23

Once unaware of the importance of pensions, a Vermont ESP leads the fight for equity in retirement plans.

BULLETIN BOARD

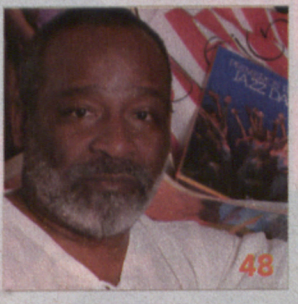
Colorful Quilts 44

Are your bulletin boards a bore? Let your students liven them up on a monthly basis. Check out holiday activity ideas and a lesson plan that mixed recipes and kids' favorite writers.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Beating the Holiday Bulge 46

Start a fitness routine now to keep your waistline in check throughout this high-calorie season.



PEOPLE

Going to the Dogs 48

How a retired Montana teacher's dog sled team took her back to the classroom. Also, teachers' passions for quilting, carving, and preserving Black dance memorabilia.

LAST BELL

Don't Scold, Organize! 64

When students take action on issues important to them, it makes them more engaged learners.

5 **Editor's Note**
7 **President's Viewpoint**
8 **TalkBack**
11 **UpFront** Wyoming's education boom, plus gifts teachers really want.
18 **Leading the Way**
19 **State Report**
42 **Spotlight**
43 **Debate** Is teaching manners a good use of class time?
51 **Resources**

56 **EDUCATION MARKET**
63 **MARKETPLACE**

ON THE WEB

MONEY MATTERS www.nea.org/pay
Take the pledge to fight for professional pay for teachers and support professionals.

TALKING ABOUT IT www.nea.org/crt
Find resources, including lesson plans, to help you connect with the diverse students in your classroom.

PRAIRIE SCHOOL www.neatoday.org
Visit the Baldwin School featured in this month's issue via our online slideshow and video.

www.neatoday.org

Visit *NEA Today* on the Web
www.neatoday.org

ILLUSTRATION H&F: JIM DANDY; SMALL PHOTOS FROM TOP: JOHN OLENDER, JERROLL SHIRES, SUSAN GOLDMAN, AL LEVIE, SCOTT SUCHMAN
COVER PHOTO: SCOTT SUCHMAN

NUTRITION ISN'T WHAT'S ON THEIR MINDS. BUT WE KNOW IT'S ON YOURS.

We all know the importance of raising healthy children. We also know that parents can't do it alone. That's why we at America's beverage companies are proud to announce we're taking a major step to help.

Working together with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation–a joint initiative of the American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation–we've developed new School Beverage Guidelines, which you'll see in many schools starting this fall.

Under these new guidelines, students will have a broad range of lower-calorie, nutritious, smaller portion beverage choices–100% juice, low-fat milk and bottled water in elementary and middle schools, with the addition of diet sodas, sports drinks and low-calorie teas in high schools.

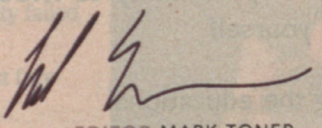
It's all part of a broader effort to teach children the importance of a balanced diet and exercise. By working together with parents, teachers, and government and health professionals, we hope to help America's current and future schoolchildren grow up healthier than ever.

For more details, visit www.ameribev.org

The Coca-Cola Company · Cadbury Schweppes Americas Beverages · PEPSI

Money Matters

Debbie Ennels, who appears on this issue's cover with her grandson, loves her job as a classroom aide. But after her landlord sold her apartment building, Ennels wound up in a shelter, where she and her grandchild live with recovering drug addicts, parolees, and others whose lives are "in transition." Her take-home pay—a scant $804 a month—left her with no alternative. ¶ Stories like hers illustrate why we must fight for professional pay for teachers and education support professionals. In this issue, you'll meet Bob Moehlig, a veteran math teacher who moonlights as a locksmith, and second-year special ed teacher Allison Wegg, who has to borrow money from her parents to get by. Then there's Jerry Parham. The Virginia bus driver and classroom aide doesn't just have a second job—he has a third, a fourth, and a fifth. ¶ More districts than ever offer starting salaries of at least $40,000, the minimum NEA believes all teachers should be paid. And from Alabama to Illinois, ESPs have won hard-fought battles for a living wage. But far more needs to be done. The statistics are distressing—nearly half of all teachers leave the profession, and 70 percent of ESPs make less than $25,000. ¶ Visit NEA's professional pay site (www.nea.org/pay) to see how salaries stack up, find ways to make a difference, and arm yourself against myths (like the age-old "teachers work just six hours a day" chestnut). Ask your friends to sign a pledge supporting educators and professional pay. And tell us what you think.



EDITOR MARK TONER
mtoner@nea.org

neatoday
www.neatoday.org

EXECUTIVE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER
Leona Hiraoka

EDITOR
Mark Toner

MANAGER, MANUFACTURING AND PRODUCTION
Bill Fischer

MANAGER, NEA.ORG
Lavonne Luquis

MANAGER, ADMINISTRATION
Earline Spence

WRITERS/EDITORS
Michelle Chovan
Mary Ellen Flannery
Sabrina Holcomb
Alain Jehlen
Cynthia Kopkowski
Con Lehane
Amanda Litvinov
John Rosales
Tim Walker

NEA.ORG
Paula Chavez-Talley
Sheala Durant
Bonnie Gardner
Joe Hammond
Cindy Long
Debbie Padgett
Brad Ritter
Karen Zauber

ART DIRECTION
Groff Creative Inc.

PRODUCTION
Marsha Blackburn
Christian Lopez
Alice Trued

ADVERTISING SALES
Rich Datz
rdatz@educationworld.com
856-983-7199

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR
Branita Griffin Henson

ADMINISTRATION
Rizwana Asif
John Young

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Sheree Crute
Rebecca L. Weber

INTERNS
Truphena Choti
Nora Shalaway

We are interested in hearing your feedback:

BY MAIL: *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036
BY E-MAIL: neatoday@nea.org BY FAX: (202) 822-7206

STUDENTS TEACHING STUDENTS

Challenged by their principal to learn about tolerance and diversity, the students of Whitwell, TN chose the Holocaust. This inspiring documentary shows how students and educators can teach the world powerful lessons.

DEVELOPED BY EDUCATORS TO BE A TEACHING TOOL AND ACTIVELY INVOLVE STUDENTS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS, THIS INNOVATIVE DVD INCLUDES:

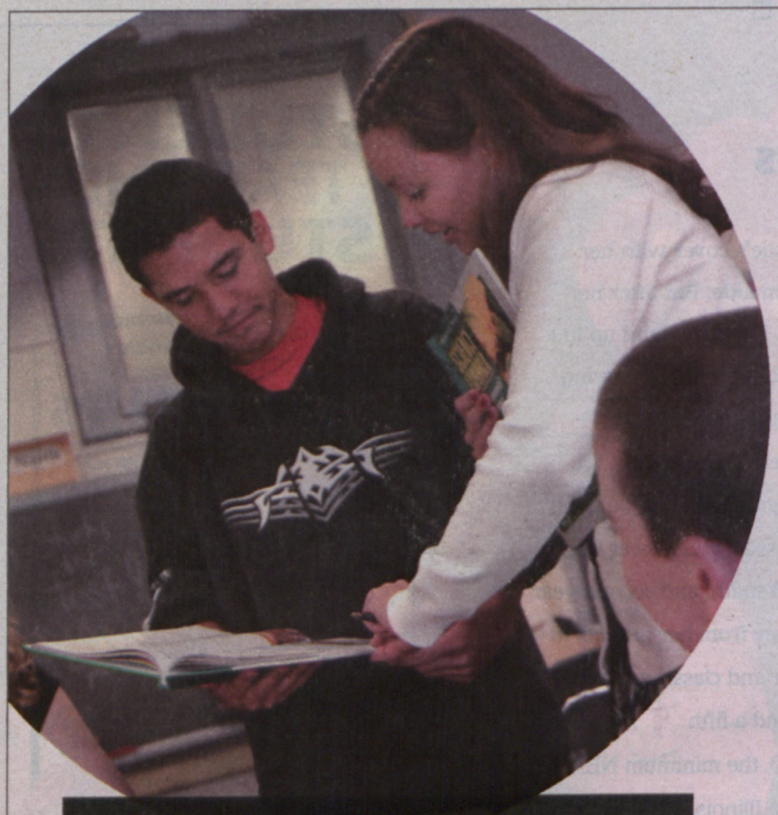
- 4 Lesson Plans targeting grades 6-12
- 1 Interactive Study Guide targeting grades 6-12
- Interactive Pop-Ups to enhance film content and provide discussion points
- Student handout materials
- Teachers Manual

To order, call 800-444-0653
or visit www.paperclipsstore.com

ORDER NOW!

Available Now:
$39.99
To order, call 800-444-0653
or visit www.supersizemestore.com

DVD VIDEO HART SHARP VIDEO
© 2006 Hart Sharp Video, LLC. All rights reserved.



Put our experience to the test

Does your homeowners insurance still make the grade?

With the NEA Homeowners® Insurance Program, underwritten for NEA members by Horace Mann Insurance Company and its affiliates, you'll receive coverages and benefits **designed specifically to meet the needs of educators** like yourself.

Horace Mann has been helping the educational community since 1945. Let us provide you with the protection you deserve for your property and belongings, **at your home and at your work.**

For more information, contact your local Horace Mann representative. You may also call 1-800-999-1030 or visit us on the Web at **www.horacemann.com**.

nea Member Benefits
www.neamb.com

Horace Mann®
Educated Financial Solutions

CM-P40032 (9/06) HONT1106

nea

NEA PRESIDENT
Reg Weaver

NEA VICE PRESIDENT
Dennis Van Roekel

NEA SECRETARY-TREASURER
Lily Eskelsen

NEA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Mike Billirakis, Ohio
Mark Cebulski, Wisconsin
Carolyn Crowder, Oklahoma
Lily Eskelsen, Utah
Michael Marks, Mississippi
Becky Pringle, Pennsylvania
Marsha Smith, Maryland
Dennis Van Roekel, Arizona
Reg Weaver, Illinois

NEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
John Wilson

neatoday

***NEA Today* Local Editor Advisory Board 2006–07**
Secret Bohm, Webster University Missouri National Education Association (Missouri); Brionna Harder, Minneapolis Federation of Teachers Local 59 (Minnesota); Steve Latham, Shelby County Education Association (Alabama); Deborah Montague, Jackson-Madison County Education Association (Tennessee); Carole Palmer, Specialists in Education Association (Wyoming); Paul Phillips, Quincy Education Association (Massachusetts); Linda Riley, Grand Island Education Association (Nebraska)

NEA Today (ISSN 0734-7219) is published eight times a year, monthly, in September, October, November, January, February, March, April, and May by the National Education Association, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3290.

Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *NEA Today*, Attn: NEA Business & Finance Address Change, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: (202) 822-7065.

Members: To change address, see information below.

NEA Today is mailed to all NEA members as a benefit of membership. Nonmember subscription prices: $65 for institution subscriptions; $100 for individual domestic and foreign subscriptions. For members, subscriptions represent $4.55 of annual dues.

Advertising within *NEA Today* is screened, but the publishing of any advertisement does not imply NEA endorsement of the product or views expressed.

Need to change your address?

Please send your address to NEA FMS:

BY MAIL:
NEA Financial & Membership Services
Attn: Address Change
1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036

BY FAX:
(202) 822-7669

ON THE WEB:
www.neatoday.org

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

Sounding the Alarm

The school dropout crisis has devastating effects on young people. NEA plans to face it head-on.

The statistics are staggering. According to estimates, about 30 percent of high school students drop out before graduation, meaning about 1 million students fail to graduate from high school every year. That amounts to some 7,000 students who drop out of school each day.

This is a deadly number that is having devastating effects on America's young people, especially low-income and minority students. Only 5 in 10 Black and Hispanic students graduate on time with a standard diploma, and less than one-half of American Indian and Alaska Native students complete high school.

What happens when Johnny and his friends drop out of school? Studies show that each class of high school dropouts costs the nation more than $200 billion in lost wages and tax revenues, as well as spending for social support programs. High school dropouts have an earnings disadvantage that tends to remain with them throughout their lives. Without the required education to obtain a good-paying job, high school dropouts often face a bleak future. Among inmates of state and federal prisons, the majority failed to complete high school.

So what is the answer? Team NEA, we must face this problem head-on.

In an effort to refocus our nation on this crisis, we have launched a comprehensive plan to reduce the high school dropout rate. Drawn from a wide range of experience and data, the NEA plan calls for interventions that have been proven to be successful in improving student achievement and decreasing dropouts.

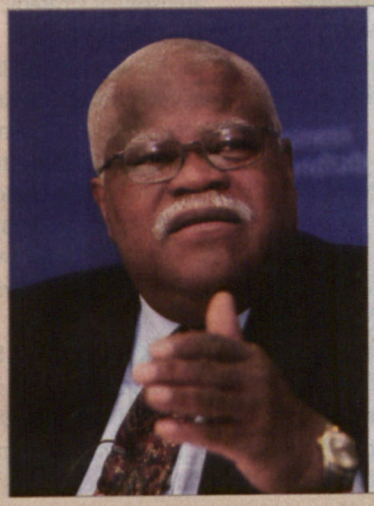
Among our sources was a 2006 study by Civic Enterprises that shared dropouts' insights on why they left school before graduation. They cited a number of factors that would have kept them in school: enhancing the connection between school and work; providing real-world learning experiences; making school more relevant and engaging; and providing more help to struggling students.

We heard their pleas, and our plan addresses these issues and more. Many high school students are falling through the cracks and dropping out, so we will fill that gap by making sure students receive individual attention in smaller classes and learning communities as well as tutoring options during the school day, weekends, and summer breaks.

Our best hope of keeping students in school will require a multi-pronged attack. We will work to provide educators with the training and resources to spot the common dropout indicators: poor grades, poor attendance, poor family support, and lack of interest. We will fight to expand students' graduation options by partnering with community colleges in career and technical fields and with alternative schools so that youngsters have multiple paths to earn a diploma and achieve success.

And we will act early. Children at risk need to be identified at a young age—as early as preschool—so that sustained support can be applied. Research shows that success in the elementary grades diminishes the possibility of later dropping out in high school.

Putting our Dropout Plan into action will demand a team approach—the combined efforts of parents, educators, administrators, community-based organizations, businesses, and federal, state, and local governments. There is no one magical, quick-fix remedy to the dropout problem. It is a complex issue that requires a complex array of solutions.



"We have a responsibility to step in and end the 'slow disengagement' that leads 16-year-olds to opt out of their basic right to a great public school."

—REG WEAVER

But one message comes across loud and clear from dropouts themselves: we must help youth to overcome their sense of disconnectedness. We have a responsibility to step in and end the "slow disengagement" that leads 16-year-olds to opt out of their basic right to a great public school.

We can turn the tide on this epidemic by executing our plan with a laser-like and purposeful focus. The nation's dropout problem is generating a lot of passionate debate, but let's remember what Mark Twain once said: "Thunder is good, thunder is impressive, but it is lightning that does the work."

Team NEA, I know you can deliver the lightning!

Reg Weaver

NEA PRESIDENT REG WEAVER

PHOTO: LESLIE E. KOSSOFF/NEA

WIKI WOES

Wikipedia is perhaps the most pervasive form of low-level research permeating its way into our education system. The article "Getting WIKI With It" (October) unveiled the faux pas of using a glorified, organized blog for "research."

However, the article's claim that it engages our youth is on the mark. It is this millennial generation's *World Book Encyclopedia*, and they have fallen in love with it. The only difference was that the *World Book Encyclopedia* was deemed reliable—not edited by 18-year-olds.

In our district, we use it as background information only. The only problem is that our own NEA educators aren't aware that [Wikipedia] isn't an appropriate source for research. It is merely an organized, interesting, widely used, informative blog.

PAIGE JAEGER
Glens Falls, New York

ASK A QUESTION...

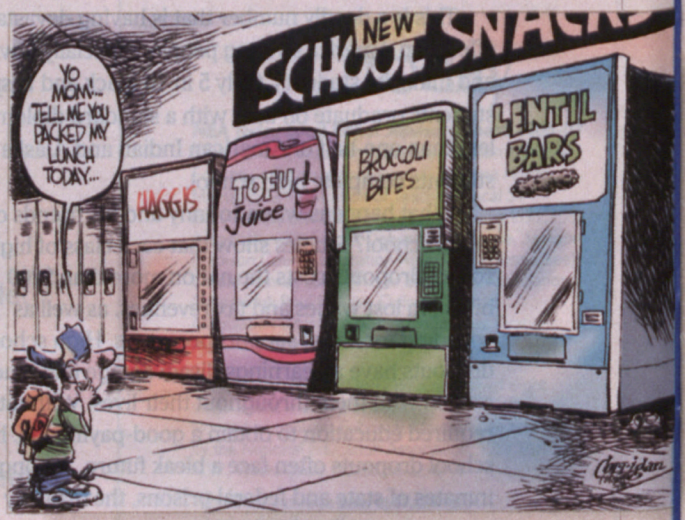
As a 30-year veteran, I was excited to read the "Then and Now" article (September), which was my life story! But you topped it all this month when you answered a question I had just heard at one of my school's district meetings: What is a Wikipedia? (October). It seems we can count on your magazine to keep us informed of both the history of and the latest in education.

MARYANN RISI
Jericho, New York

FAITH NO MORE

A "Test of Faith"? ("UpFront," September) Neither the President of the United States nor the National Council of Churches should be testing faith in state settings. The founding fathers settled this (see the First Amendment). What is crucial for American students is that someone must soon decide whether these "unique human beings" should be further subjected to "learning how to learn" and social adjustment strategy, or whether intellectual capital and cultural literacy will better enable them to be a factor on the world scene. Educators must make this choice, not religious leaders.

BOB TAYLOR
Park Hill, Kentucky



BACK TO BASICS

I have to agree with Keith Parker ("Should Computers Be Used in Every Classroom?" September). By the time a student takes a class at the university level, the lack of basic training really shows up. By this time, the basics should be anchored in cement. You don't climb the mountain before you climb the molehill, and you don't drive a car until you have had driver training.

ILA OAKS
Kalispell, Montana

PRESERVING THE PAST

I enjoyed the "Then and Now" article about desegregation in the 1960s (September). As a White "Yankee" teacher who taught in the East Carroll Parish system in 1969–71, I also set down in a pamphlet my experience and had it recorded in the Library of Congress for future primary source material. It would be most interesting to hear from past teachers, administrators, and students who also went through that important watershed in our history.

JIM ERWIN
Davison, Michigan

CYBER COMMENTARY

GENDER GAPS?

With my limited experience, I do not think I can generalize that "boys learn differently than girls." However, girls do feel more comfortable and confident with a female teacher, as do boys with a male teacher. It is up to the teacher to provide a comfortable atmosphere to all of his or her students and effectively teach to all learning styles.

—From the nea.org discussion board

HOMEWORK HELP

Today's students are less likely to stay focused because of the hurried pace and instant world in which they live. Consequently, homework or review is more important than ever. It forces the student to think about what was learned (or not learned) from the day's lesson. In addition, no matter how advanced life may be technologically, there is no replacement for the adage "practice makes perfect."

—From the nea.org discussion board

WANT TO WEIGH IN?
Chat with your colleagues on NEA's discussion boards at **www.neatoday.org/talkback.html**.

LET'S TALK

Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of four ways:

BY MAIL: Write to TalkBack, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036

THROUGH THE WEB: Go to www.neatoday.org and click on "feedback."

BY E-MAIL: Write to neatoday@nea.org

BY FAX: (202) 822-7206

Letters are edited for length and clarity.

NO TIME FOR THE EXTRAS

I retired a few years back, and I recently contacted several teachers to see if they had any need for the great teaching materials I had found useful or knew someone who could use them. The answers I got were all "no thanks, we don't have time for the extras any more." How sad. No time for art, no time for programs, or festivals, or any of the activities that made teaching so much fun for me. I'm glad I'm retired.

CLAYRE RANK
Merced, California

TABLOID TALES

Wow. An interview with Angelina Jolie ("Q&A," September). What's next? Paris? Britney? If I want to read about Angelina Jolie, there are plenty of tabloids from which to choose.

CHERYL PEACH
Puyallup, Washington

EDITOR'S NOTE

The October issue of *NEA Today* profiled the International Safety Competition (better known as the Bus Roadeo), highlighting the skills of NEA members who are bus drivers. The event, which isn't affiliated with NEA, used schoolbuses from Laidlaw Education Services, a company that has attempted to privatize bus services nationwide. *NEA Today* apologizes for including a photo of a bus displaying the company name in the feature.

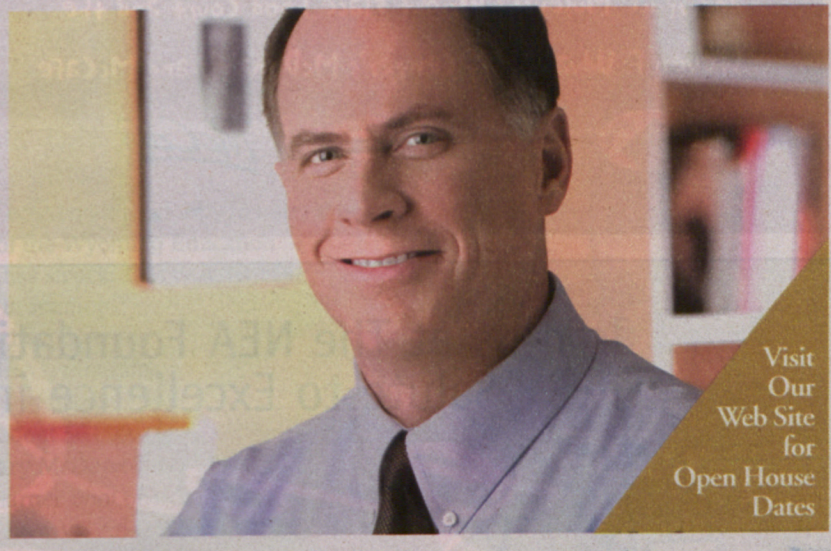
Laidlaw is a story in itself. Check out the January issue of *NEA Today* for more about its privatization attempts and the negative impact they've had on the quality of service provided to U.S. schoolchildren.

MEMBER IN THE NEWS

"GOING IN, I PROBABLY HAD EIGHT OR TEN seriously considering teaching. By the end, it was down to about two. They see how hard the work is, and they see what the demands are. Then we talk about pay, and they just can't see how it stacks up."

BARBARA JUSTICE, WHO TEACHES A CLASS FOR SENIORS THINKING ABOUT BECOMING TEACHERS.
Bristol (Virginia) Herald Courier, *August 30, 2006*

At Argosy University, the best teachers never stop learning.



Graduate degree programs in education.

Expand your horizons in education at Argosy University. We're here to help you continue along the path to higher knowledge. We offer master's, specialist, and doctoral degree programs in a range of educational concentrations.

Day, evening, weekend, and online instruction is available for your convenience. Contact us today and see how we can help you raise your level of professional education.

ARGOSY UNIVERSITY

1.888.488.7537 www.argosyu.edu/nea

Argosy University
Two First National Plaza
20 South Clark Street, 28th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603

ARGOSY UNIVERSITY LOCATIONS: ATLANTA | CHICAGO | DALLAS | DENVER | HAWAI'I | ORANGE COUNTY (Santa Ana) | PHOENIX | SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA (Point Richmond) | SARASOTA | SCHAUMBURG (Northwest Chicago) SEATTLE | TAMPA | TWIN CITIES (Eagan) | WASHINGTON DC (Arlington)

APPROVED DEGREE SITES: INLAND EMPIRE (San Bernardino) | NASHVILLE* (Franklin) | SAN DIEGO | SANTA MONICA

*Argosy University/Nashville is a branch location of Argosy University/Atlanta.

Program names vary by location. Not all programs are available at every location.

Argosy University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association (NCA) (30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400, Chicago, IL 60602, 1.800.621.7440, www.ncahlc.org).

Argosy University/Washington DC is certified to operate by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (James Monroe Building, 101 North 14th Street, Richmond, VA 23219, 1.804.225.2600).

©2006 by Argosy University® 1965 11/06

CARTOON: PATRICK CORRIGAN/THE TORONTO STAR

THINK BIG

- Visit the World's LARGEST Museum Complex
- Discover GIANT IMAX® Screens showing Educational Films
- Enjoy HUGE Savings on Meals at the National Air and Space Museum's Wright Place Food Court and the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center's McDonald's and McCafe

Smithsonian

Phone: (866) 868.7774
Visit: si.edu/groups_tours
Email: groupsales@si.edu

Donatos · McCafe

Join us at The NEA Foundation's 12th Annual Salute to Excellence in Education

gala

February 8, 2007 in Washington, DC.

Come celebrate America's educators in style at The NEA Foundation's annual gala. The setting is grand. The theme is Mardi Gras. The dress is creative black tie. And the awards? Well, you'll just have to join us to see who receives them. For details, call 202.822.7840 or visit www.neafoundation.org.

The NEA Foundation

upfront

Trends
Facts
Innovators
Research
First 5
News
Quotes
Humor

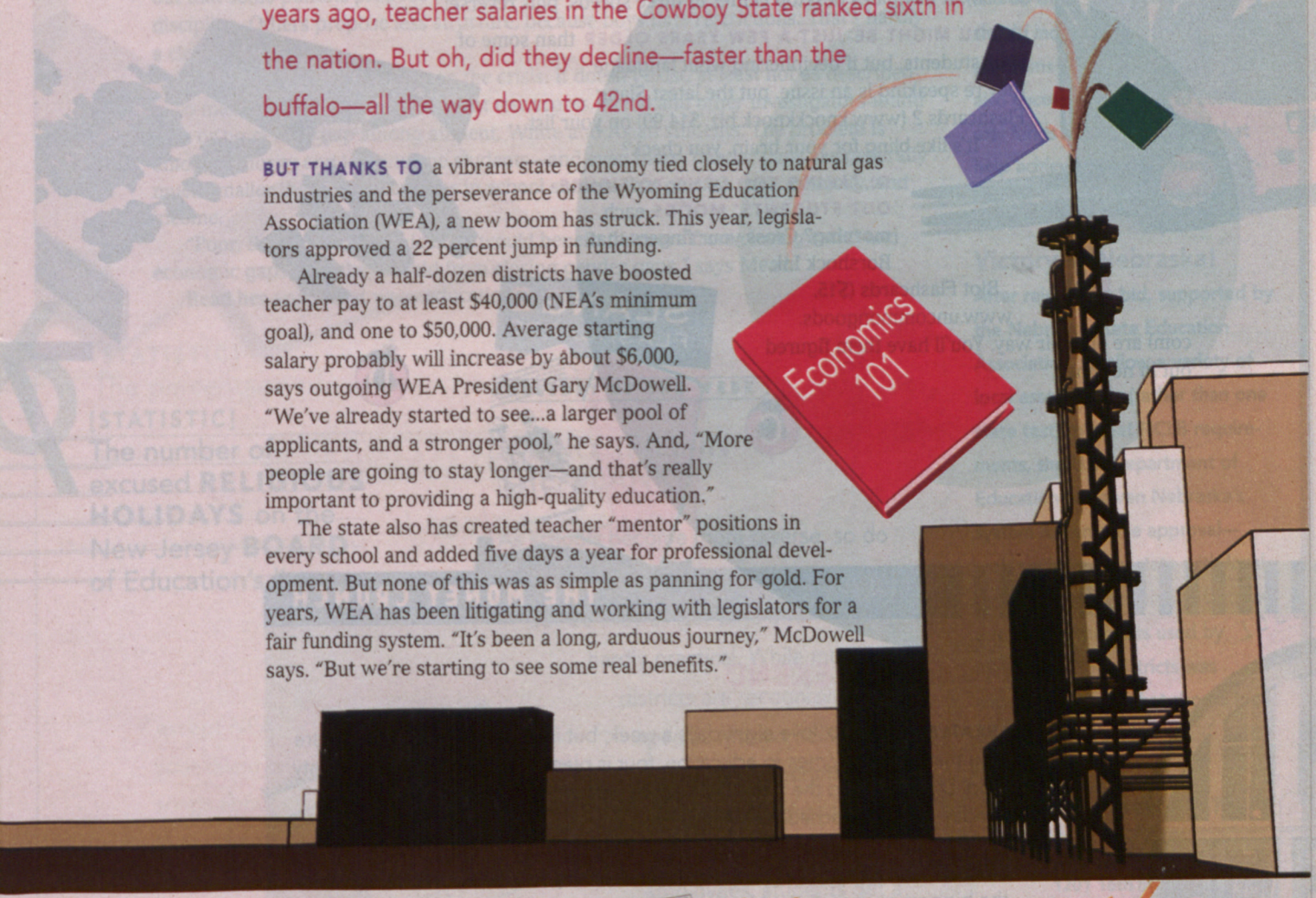
Striking Pay Dirt in Wyoming

The good ol' days in Wyoming weren't so long ago. Twenty years ago, teacher salaries in the Cowboy State ranked sixth in the nation. But oh, did they decline—faster than the buffalo—all the way down to 42nd.

BUT THANKS TO a vibrant state economy tied closely to natural gas industries and the perseverance of the Wyoming Education Association (WEA), a new boom has struck. This year, legislators approved a 22 percent jump in funding.

Already a half-dozen districts have boosted teacher pay to at least $40,000 (NEA's minimum goal), and one to $50,000. Average starting salary probably will increase by about $6,000, says outgoing WEA President Gary McDowell. "We've already started to see...a larger pool of applicants, and a stronger pool," he says. And, "More people are going to stay longer—and that's really important to providing a high-quality education."

The state also has created teacher "mentor" positions in every school and added five days a year for professional development. But none of this was as simple as panning for gold. For years, WEA has been litigating and working with legislators for a fair funding system. "It's been a long, arduous journey," McDowell says. "But we're starting to see some real benefits."



12 WHAT'S UNDER THE TREE?

14 PROMOTING GEOGRAPHY AWARENESS

16 FLYING A FOREIGN FLAG

GASWORKS ILLUSTRATION: JASON REED; ILLUSTRATIONS OF BOOKS: PHOTODISC

Ho-Ho! Ha-Ha!

FIRST 5 YEARS

There's no avoiding it: As the holidays approach, your classroom elves will arrive at your desk, bearing gifts of apple-scented candles and "#1 Teacher" mugs. Of course you appreciate how much they appreciate you, but nothing says it's rude to daydream about more helpful gifts!

A) SANTA'S ONLY GOT TO WORRY about waking early once a year. But there's no more sleeping in for you! Maybe you'll get a Puzzle Alarm Clock (www.bimbambanana.com, $52) that shoots its pieces into the air and refuses to stop bleating until you've reassembled them.

B) TIRED OF LIFTING ALL THOSE PRACTICE TESTS? Here's hoping for the Mini Jack Remote Control Forklift (www.thingsyouneverknew.com, $39.98). It navigates desktop clutter in three speeds, plus reverse!

C) YOU MIGHT BE JUST A FEW YEARS OLDER than some of your students, but if deciphering what language they're speaking is an issue, put the latest Slang Flashcards 2 (www.knockknock.biz, $14.99) on your list. It's like bling for your brain, you check?

D) TAKING TOO LONG TO FIGURE OUT STUDENTS' MOODS each morning? Cross your fingers that Rorshock Ink Blot Flashcards ($15, www.uncommongoods.com) are on their way. You'll have them figured out in no time.

THE MONEY CRUNCH

THE LONG WEEKEND

THE BEATLES NEEDED love eight days a week, but increasingly, rural schools are finding that when it comes to education, four is plenty. Idaho's Bear Lake County School District joined the trend last year by moving its 1,240 students to a Monday–Thursday schedule.

Motivated largely by finances—its student population keeps dwindling—Bear Lake saved about $130,000 with the four-day schedule. Utilities represent the biggest savings, but a big chunk of change was also saved by not paying custodians or bus drivers for their "day off." (And to that idea, like John and Paul, we say: Help!)

ORNAMENT PHOTO: CORBIS; SCHOOL DOORS PHOTO: ANDERSEN ROSS

Oh, Boy!

Are you following the 'Boy Crisis'?

THAT'S WHAT *NEWSWEEK* called the discovery that girls do better in many education arenas than boys. Some critics go so far as to say that schools are unfair to boys. And to that end, one Massachusetts high school student filed a civil rights complaint. "If you sit still, follow orders, and listen to what they say, you'll do well and get good grades. Men naturally rebel against this," he told a reporter.

What can we do? Sara Mead, author of *The Truth About Boys and Girls,* points out that some pundits propose more classroom structure, because boys need the discipline. Others propose less structure, because boys hate restrictions. That's hardly a clear solution.

But Mead has another take on the crisis: It doesn't exist, at least not as described in so many media reports. Looking at test scores, Mead and other investigators found little or no gender gap among affluent, White and Asian students. The problem is among minority and low-income students—and even there, gender gaps are generally much smaller than the differences in school success that go with race, ethnicity, and income.

"Poor, Black, and Hispanic boys would benefit far more from closing racial and economic gaps than they would from closing gender gaps," says Mead.

Read her analysis at www.educationsector.org.

6

[STATISTIC]

The number of excused **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS** on the New Jersey **BOARD** of Education's list.

SOURCE: CNN

HOLIDAY OF THE WEEK

MERRY (FILL-IN-THE-BLANK)!

As schools become more diverse, so do the holidays recognized by your students. But do they all get days off? That's hardly practical. While more districts are recognizing specific Muslim holidays, others are experimenting with a novel idea: floating days. Like corporate employees, students get a number of holidays to use as they choose.

Notepad

Where is Art?

Since the enactment of the No Child Left Behind law (NCLB), 22 percent of school districts have cut back on art and music, according to the Center for Education Policy. And yet, education research shows arts education can boost achievement in core subjects, as well as transform poor schools.

Congress must address this "unintended consequence" of NCLB, as it works to reauthorize the law in 2007, according to the "Arts Unified Statement," signed by NEA and 50 other organizations. It should increase funding for arts programs—and, at the same time, also encourage schools to use federal funds for arts programs that help achievement. For more information, go to www.aep-arts.org.

Victory in Nebraska!

After rejecting a bid, supported by the Nebraska State Education Association, to allow a variety of local assessments (rather than one state test) to meet NCLB requirements, the U.S. Department of Education has given Nebraska's system its tentative approval—making it the only state with local assessments. Beginning in October, a review of the tests used by Nebraska's 254 districts was expected—a step that should lead to formal approval.

Have a great idea?

> Send it by mail:
NEA Today
1201 16th St., N.W.,
Washington, DC 20036

> Send it by e-mail:
neatoday@nea.org

PHOTO : STOCKBYTE; YELLOW SPLASH: CHAD J SHAFFER; CALENDAR: C SQUARED STUDIOS

Where in the World is Geography?

On the eve of National Geography Awareness Week (November 12–18), teachers across the country are hoping Congress will pass the Teaching Geography Is Fundamental Act and rescue the subject from the curriculum backwaters to which it's been banished by NCLB's emphasis on reading and math scores.

"GEOGRAPHY has become a stepchild to other disciplines as NCLB narrows the curriculum," says Washington, D.C., fifth-grade teacher Trelane Clark-Suazo. Clark-Suazo is a coordinator for National Geographic's "Geography Action!," a teacher-friendly program that gives K–12 educators online access to themed lesson plans, activities, and multi-disciplinary resources.

This year's theme, "Africa in 3-D: Diversity, Demographics, and Discovery," kicks off a five-year, round-the-world curriculum series that originated last year with "Migration: The Human Journey." Each year, teachers and students will study a different continent as they follow the migration of the human family.

Get online resources and join the Geography Alliance network of educators by visiting www.nationalgeographic.com/geographyaction/.

VIRTUAL HERO

SHOULD YOU DECIDE TO ACCEPT IT...

YOUR MISSION: SAVE A PATIENT INFECTED WITH A DEADLY DISEASE.

THE STRATEGY: Locate the virus and activate immune cells in time—hurry! But don't worry. It's just a game, and by the end, you'll learn all you need to know.

Educational video games, like Immune Attack for high school students, can dramatically boost achievement, says Henry Kelly, president of the non-profit Federation of American Scientists, by combining immediate and continuous feedback with unlimited time for mastery. And consider this: Unlike a textbook, the game demands participation. "You can't just sit there with your mind turned off," Kelly explains.

—NORA SHALAWAY

PHOTO TOP: CORBIS; PHOTO BOTTOM: KRIS TIMKEN

Faint Praise for Charter Schools

IN THE WAKE OF A NATIONAL STUDY ON CHARTER SCHOOLS, THIS WAS THE BEST THAT THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S STATISTICS GURU COULD SAY: "WE KNOW THEY ARE NOT DOING HARM." (AND, WE MUST ASK, IS THAT THE SAME STANDARD TO WHICH THEY HOLD YOU?)

ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, released in August, fourth-graders in traditional public schools did significantly better in reading and math than comparable students attending charter schools. The study used National Assessment of Educational Progress test scores, involved 376,000 students, and controlled for race and socioeconomic status.

Charter school proponents quickly responded, arguing the data didn't give the full picture or reflect improvement over time. NEA President Reg Weaver agreed that statistical analysis, while helpful, shouldn't be the only indicator of success. He added that while charter schools can facilitate reform and help develop creative teaching methods, "they are not the solution. The solution starts with adequate and equitable funding for all schools."

[STATISTIC]

The percentage of **HIGH SCHOOL** seniors who attend **RELIGIOUS** services weekly.

SOURCE: THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

You Write the Songs!

IT'S LIKE KARAOKE IN THE TEACHERS' LOUNGE, except *NEA Today* would like to showcase your talent on a bigger stage. Record your songs about the teaching life and e-mail them to neatoday-reply@list.nea.org. We'll pick a handful and ask readers to cast their votes for the best. It's like the old Olympics—amateurs only, please—we're not interested in songs for sale.

Capitol Report

Where's the Money?

You might have thought schools got shortchanged by Congress last year, but the future looks equally poor. Senate and House committees have each approved funding bills for 2007 that woefully slash the resources available for public schools. Both the House and Senate bills cut overall education funding, including a deep reduction in funding for programs under the No Child Left Behind law—just as new testing mandates go into full effect. NEA strongly opposes these bills and encourages its members to speak out to Congress about their feelings as well. For more information, visit www.nea.org/lac.

Health Care for All

With the number of uninsured Americans soaring—from 41.2 million in 2001 to 45.8 million in 2004—the issue of quality health care for all is increasingly important. Quality health care is essential to families' well-being, and children's access to health care impacts their ability to learn. An NEA-supported bill offered by Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D-MI), called The United States National Health Insurance Act, would extend Medicare benefits to all Americans, allowing them to seek medical, dental, mental health, and prescription drug care from private physicians of their choice.

Want to share a story?

> Send it by mail:
NEA Today
1201 16th St., N.W.,
Washington, DC 20036

> Send it by e-mail:
neatoday@nea.org

ILLUSTRATION AND PHOTO: PHOTODISC

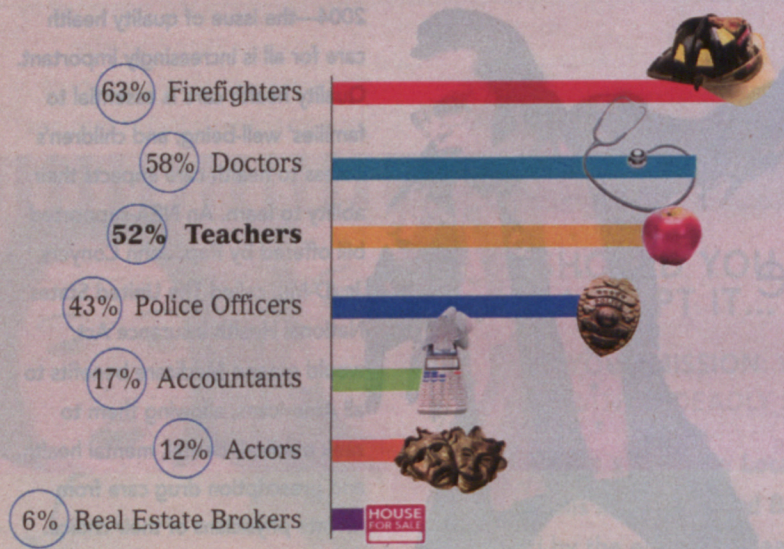
I Pledge Allegiance . . .

A COLORADO GEOGRAPHY teacher was suspended with pay in August for displaying in his classroom the flags of other nations, including China and Mexico, as well as the United Nations. Although the flags were relevant to his curriculum, school officials said they believed the teacher had violated a state law prohibiting the display of foreign flags on public property. The law does make an exception for flags used temporarily for instructional purposes.

VITAL STATS

DO YOUR STUDENTS KNOW THIS?

TEACHERS might not make the big bucks, but they are earning the public's respect, according to a new Harris Poll. The percentage of adults that say a specific job has **"GREAT PRESTIGE"** is:



BEST AND WORST

TIME WASTED OR WON?

DOES YOUR SCHOOL'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PUT YOU TO SLEEP? Make you laugh? Make you a better educator? These programs run the gamut from infuriating to inspiring, and we're trying to find the best and worst. Nominate your school's program at neatoday-reply@list.nea.org. "Winners" in the worst category won't be identified in the magazine by name or district. But real winners in the best category will, we hope, be imitated across the country.

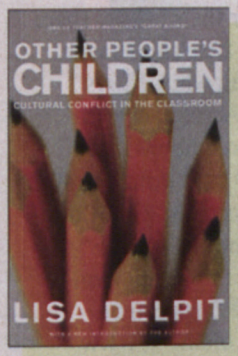
"I talk about NCLB like Ivory soap: It's 99.9 percent pure or

FLAGS: WILL WOODS (CHINA, MEXICO, UNITED NATIONS), PHOTODISC (SOUTH AFRICA, SWEDEN); VITAL STATS PHOTOS (TOP TO BOTTOM): VEER INCORPORATED, PHOTODISC, DIGITAL VISION, DON FARRALL, KAREN BEARD, STOCKDISC, GROFF CREATIVE INC.; CLOCK: PHOTODISC

BOOK FOCUS

An Updated Classic

Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom (The New Press) has been required reading for student teachers since it was first published in 1995, and Lisa Delpit's essays on teaching in a multicultural society have solidly stood the test of time. But as the MacArthur Fellow notes in her new introduction, a lot has happened in the past decade—NCLB and Katrina, for starters. Delpit asks educators to imagine a 100-year-old man on his deathbed in 2092. He's led a full life, but he has one regret: "I just really wish with all my heart that I could have scored higher on the state-mandated achievement tests." Where there's humor to be found, Delpit depicts it, but be prepare to move outside your comfort zone and to learn something new about you and your students: her insights and analysis are as rigorous as they are engaging.



—REBECCA L. WEBER

2

[STATISTIC]

The percentage of **YOUNG ADULTS** in the United States with **ANTI-SEMITIC** propensities.

SOURCE: ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

Q&A

QUESTIONS FOR **Nathaniel Philbrick**

The Real Thanksgiving

Nantucket author Nathaniel Philbrick, winner of the National Book Award for *In the Heart of the Sea*, has a new book called *Mayflower*. In it, Philbrick tells the true (and tragic) story of what really happened between the Pilgrims and Indians after they got up from the Thanksgiving table.

Tell us about your own Thanksgiving lessons in school.

Answer: It was sometime around third grade. We learned the traditional stories about the Pilgrims arriving at Plymouth Rock, being greeted by the Native Americans who taught them how to plant corn, and the story culminates with the first Thanksgiving. It was a great, inspirational story and, in many ways, it was truthful.

Do we need to change the way we teach Thanksgiving?

Answer: I think it's actually being taught quite well. If I have a complaint, I think it's that we stop in third grade—and we don't pursue it in high school. That's when they're ready to learn the complexities and the disturbing aspects of this story.

Is it true that the Pilgrims and Indians lived peacefully and cooperatively for 50-plus years before their relationship disintegrated?

Answer: Part of the point of my book is that there was this remarkable period of coexistence in the Plymouth Rock Colony....Given that we're a nation that sees our diversity as our greatest strength, that lesson of the first Thanksgiving is perfectly appropriate.

But the fact of the matter is there was King Philip's War [a bloody conflict between settlers and Indians 55 years after that first Thanksgiving]—and that undercuts that lesson. For whatever reason, Americans have seized upon the story of the Pilgrims and Native Americans as our myth of national origin. We owe it to ourselves to fully explore what the reality was.

In school, it's often "Pilgrims then, dot, dot, dot, here's Lexington and Concord." The Indians don't reappear until the Trail of Tears. I know as a teenager, I had begun to think of the Pilgrims as caricatures, cardboard characters that get trotted out for the Macy's Day parade. And I wondered—what do they really have to do with the tortured soul of America? My hope is that, when you see it in the context of King Philip's War, it becomes a story that you can connect to American history. It's a heartbreaking story of what might have been.

How can teachers best teach these lessons?

Answer: I know I can't relate to history unless it's through the people and the story of how it happened. I don't think anybody can relate to anything, past or present, unless there's an emotional engagement.

something. There's not much needed in the way of change."

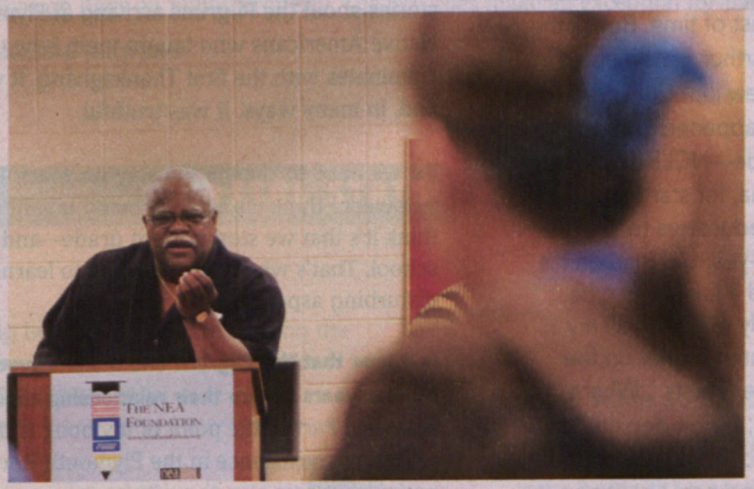
—U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings in an interview with reporters on August 30.

On the Same Page

A year after Hurricane Katrina washed through public schools on the Gulf Coast, the NEA Foundation returns to restock library shelves.

Even a splash of water will ruin a sheet of paper. And lots of water—we're talking about Biblical levels of rain and sea, mixed with every kind of garbage, rising to rooflines—will ruin lots of paper, including almost every good book in the public school libraries of coastal Louisiana and Mississippi.

That's a call for help that NEA President Reg Weaver and NEA Foundation President Harriet Sanford simply couldn't ignore. "A good library is a vital resource for every great public school," Weaver said. "Bringing books back to these schools and these students who have lost so much is a top priority for NEA."



This fall, Weaver and Sanford flew south from Washington, D.C., with $340,000 in cash grants from the NEA Foundation to help rebuild public school libraries in four Gulf Coast school districts. Although Hurricane Katrina made its disastrous visit more than a year ago, schools still struggle to return to normal—many students and school employees continue to live in FEMA trailers and go to school in portable classrooms. Among their many problems are empty library shelves.

"What we hear from superintendents and other leadership is that they have very few resources for restocking libraries," Sanford said. Unlike other boxed-up donations that libraries may have received, the Foundation—largely through a contribution from the McCormick Tribune Foundation—is providing cash that librarians can use to buy age-appropriate, nonfiction books to sustain curriculum and support instructional needs. Local leaders also can choose to buy media technology.

The NEA Foundation Katrina Grants are part of a series of efforts by NEA and its members to help their stricken Gulf Coast colleagues, as well as students and public schools. First, the NEA Disaster Relief Fund raised more than $1.5 million, sent directly to public school employees to pay for food, clothing, and new roofs over their heads. Then, NEA's Adopt-a-School program matched 223 schools with donors for supplies, books, and equipment, while NEA's Read Across America delivered books and $1,000 cash grants to 40 schools in its "Gulf Coast Reading Relief Tour." (More information on relief efforts can be found online at www.nea.org/disasterrelief or www.neafoundation.org.)

The devastation remains striking, Sanford said. "It takes your breath away." But, she added, so do the efforts made by teachers to provide stability for their children. "What we saw were teachers, administrators, and other public school educators who all joined forces to ensure that students had a place to return to—they realized that kids need stability, and libraries became a key part of that....The teachers are resilient. The kids are resilient. They're proud people and they want to go back to normal. In many ways, our money allows them to do that."

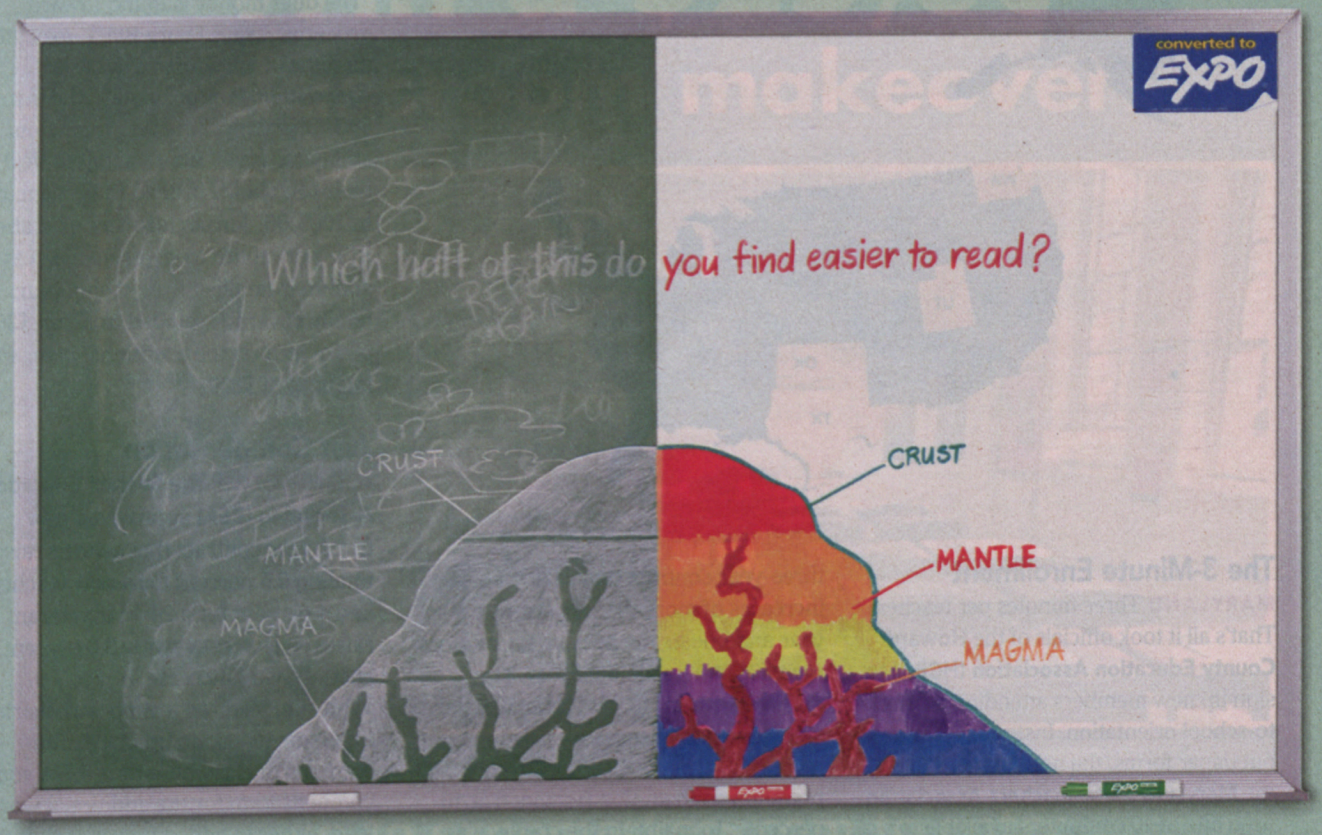
"A GOOD LIBRARY is a vital resource for every great public school. Bringing books back to these schools and these students who have lost so much is a top priority for NEA." —REG WEAVER

For Weaver, it was his fourth humanitarian trip to the suffering region. He has previously distributed other NEA money and books, as well as his characteristic message of hope, resilience, and unity.

"I will never forget what I have seen, or what these brave people have told me," he said shortly after his first visit to the devastated region. "I will carry their stories with me."

—MARY ELLEN FLANNERY

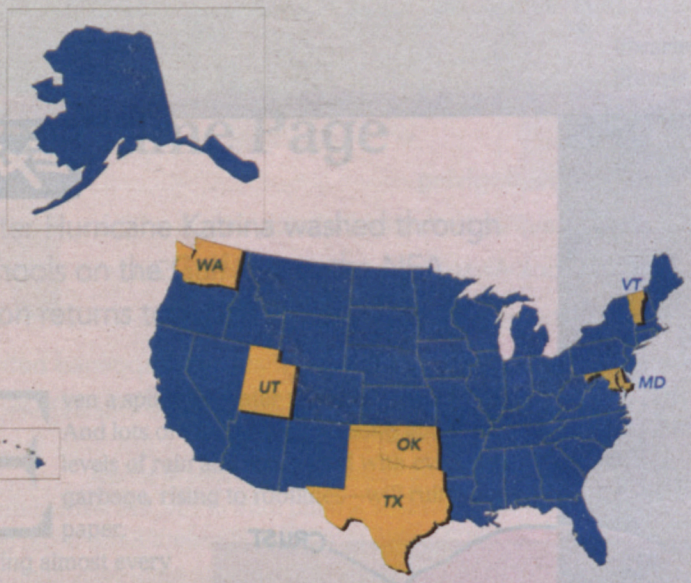
PHOTOS TOP: CRYSTAL LoGIUDICE; BOTTOM: THIGPEN PHOTOGRAPHY



More than 9 out of 10 teachers agree that color enhances learning.
So pick up any of the 20 vibrant Expo® Dry-Erase Markers and bring the power of color to your classroom today.

If you don't already have an Expo white board, go to expoboardconverter.com

EXPO®



The 3-Minute Enrollment

MARYLAND Three minutes per teacher. That's all it took officials of the **Howard County Education Association (HCEA)** to sign up new members attending a back-to-school orientation. Instead of filling out paper forms, the newest members of the **Maryland State Teachers Association** used one of 10 computers available to access the On-Line Membership Enrollment System (OLM). While several other states have partially automated enrollment for members using credit cards, "this is the first time NEA has had online registration using...payroll deduction," says HCEA President Ann DeLacy. "The system made it easy for them to sign up at lunchtime and between sessions." About 160 of the 320 teachers at the orientation became members. The electronic process allows new enrollees to begin receiving benefits within 24 hours.

Powerful Silence

VERMONT After a lengthy bargaining ordeal, **Windsor Southeast Education Association** officials organized a committee named "Settle the Contract." Members organized silent meetings, which took place under the window of the superintendent's office. "They also attended school board meetings en masse," says Robert Raskevitz, a **Vermont-NEA** UniServ director. "They didn't say anything out of respect, but they filled the room." The tactics worked. A settlement was reached on a three-year contract that calls for salary increases of more than 4 percent each year and boosts the base salary to more than $31,000 by the final year. The maximum salary for a veteran teacher with a master's degree was also increased, and the health insurance premium contribution remained at 10 percent. "To maintain the co-pay was huge," Raskevitz says.

Quality Control

TEXAS In an effort to curtail educator turnover, **Education Austin (EA)** members won a two-year consultation agreement that includes a 7.5 percent pay raise for education support professionals (ESPs) and teachers this school year and a 4 percent raise next year. In addition, EA won a commitment by the district to fully fund employee health insurance through fiscal year 2008. "High teacher turnover has plagued the district in recent years," says EA President Louis Malfaro. "This commitment sends a message to our teachers and staff that we want you to stay."

The High Cost of Health

UTAH Despite a recent 5.6 percent salary increase for Jordan School District teachers, many experienced a net pay cut because of an even greater rise in health insurance costs. The smaller paychecks mean that new teachers will be more difficult to recruit, while some current ones can no longer afford Association dues—about $50 per month. "The dues money is going toward groceries," says Laura Black, executive director of the **Jordan Education Association**. "Unfortunately, the insurance premiums here will impact our ability to recruit new teachers. We'll be their last choice instead of first choice." In 2005–06, Jordan teachers paid about $137 per month to cover themselves and their families. This school year, family coverage jumped to about $366 per month on the traditional plan, an increase of $229.

Just Compensation

WASHINGTON The **Everett Education Association (EEA)** approved a new three-year contract that awards raises totaling 9.5 percent for a new teacher and 4 percent for a 24-year veteran. The raises reflect a statewide 3.3 percent cost-of-living increase for 2006–07. With standardized testing and district assessments taking up increasing amounts of classroom time, EEA sought compensation for the additional workload, either in added pay or in time away from the classroom to prepare for and grade the tests.

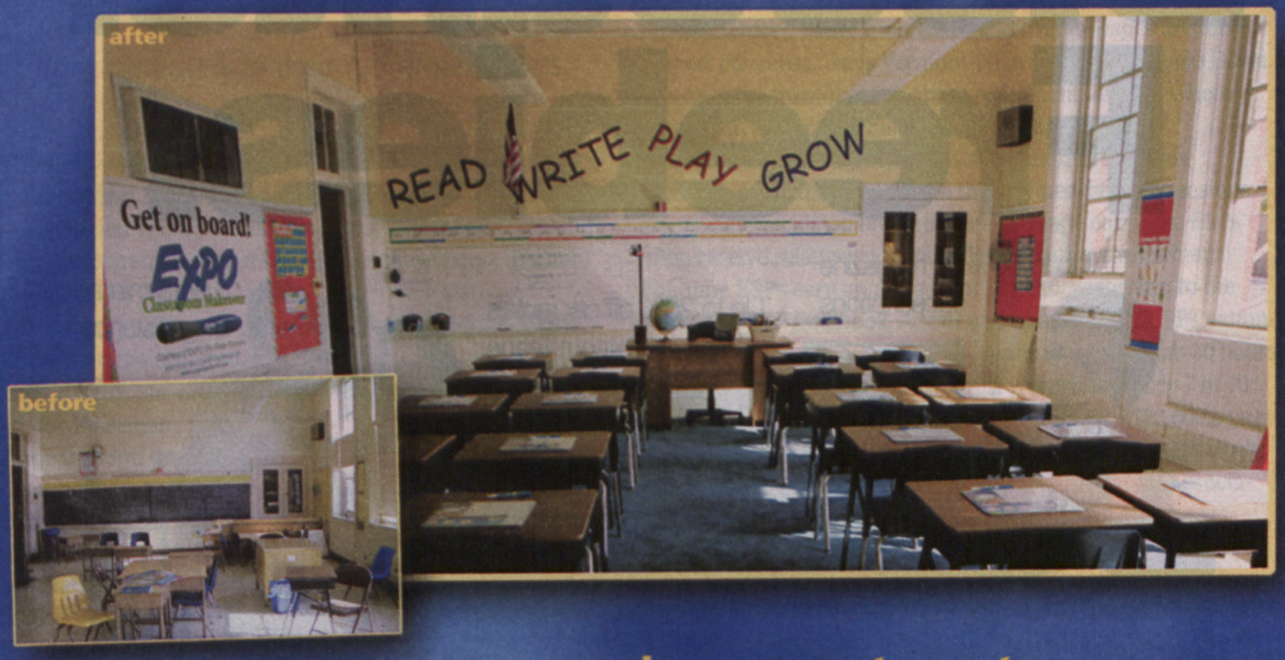
Teachers belonging to the **Federal Way Education Association (FWEA)** won a new contract through 2009. While the largest part of teacher salaries and benefits are set by the legislature based on education level and years of experience, the FWEA negotiated a supplemental contract for work done outside the classroom that will increase teacher supplemental pay in steps over the next three years.

Educators Unleashed

OKLAHOMA "Call off your teachers," state lawmakers told Joel Robison, associate executive director of the **Oklahoma Education Association (OEA)**. When legislators wanted to add anti-teacher language to several bills that would augment reasons for a teacher to be fired or not reemployed by a school, OEA members organized public demonstrations and a letter- and e-mail-writing campaign that also focused on salary. The Association's mantra was, "Three thousand dollars, no strings attached."

Enter for a chance to

Win a $25,000 classroom makeover!



go to expomarkers.com to enter

"The National 2006 Expo® Classroom Makeover Contest"
CONDENSED RULES
NO PURCHASE NECESSARY.

The Contest is open to students in grades 3 through 12 who are legal residents of the 50 United States or D.C. Void elsewhere and wherever prohibited. To enter, visit www.expomarkers.com. Entry begins 12:00:00 am ET on 6/2/06 and all entries must be received by 11:59:59 pm ET on 12/31/06. The object of the Contest is to write an original essay of 100 words or less in English that describes why one of your teachers deserves a classroom makeover. Entries will be first judged within the following age categories – (a) third grade through fifth grade; (b) sixth grade through eighth grade; (c) ninth grade through twelfth grade – on the basis of the following criteria: Content of essay (what your teacher did to deserve a classroom makeover) (40%); emotional value (30%); and creativity (30%). In the event of ties in any round, the entries involved will be re-judged by a different judge who will serve as the tiebreaker. If you are under 13 years of age, you will be required to provide verifiable parental consent in order to win a prize. Details will be provided at time of prize notification. Limit one entry per person. A maximum of 250 entries will be selected by the judges as "First Prize winners." The three (3) top-ranking entries in each grade group from among the First Prize winners will be declared "Semi-Finalists." All Semi-Finalists' entries will be posted online at www.expomarkers.com. The Semi-Finalist essays will again be judged according to the criteria listed above by qualified judges who were not involved in the First Prize judging. The top scoring essay from among the Semi-Finalist entries shall become the Grand Prize Winner. The second and third scoring essays from among the Semi-Finalist entries will be recognized as Finalists and receive the prize for Finalists described below. Up to 250 First Prizes: Five Hundred dollars cash ($500.00) or a $500 United States Series I Savings Bond and one (1) classroom makeover valued at $1,000 will be awarded per winner. Nine (9) Semi-Finalist Prizes: All Semi-Finalists will receive the First Prize package as listed above and an additional $100.00 Series I Savings Bond. Two (2) Finalist Prizes: Both Finalists will receive the First Prize and Semi-Finalists prize packages as listed above and an additional $250.00 Series I Savings Bond. One (1) Grand Prize: (A) The Grand Prize winner's school will receive: Sanford writing and marking instruments and Newell Rubbermaid products plus other items that may be used to improve the appearance, structure or curriculum of the winner's teacher's classroom and the winner's school. The total approximate retail value of this portion of the Grand Prize will not exceed $25,000. (B) The Grand Prize winner will receive: a $1,000 Series I Savings Bond for him/herself (in addition to the Series I Bonds received as a First Prize winner and Semi-Finalist.). Total maximum value of all prizes in this contest: $402,400.00. Contest is subject to the complete Official Rules, which may be found at www.expomarkers.com. Sponsor: Sanford, L.P., 2707 Butterfield Rd., Oakbrook, IL. 60523.

EXPO®

Deals. Discounts. Freebies.

Up to 85% off magazine subscriptions
Up to 25% off car rentals with unlimited mileage
3.9¢ a minute long-distance
TIME
THE SECRETS OF AMBITION
OXFORD
DINOSAURS & FOSSILS
Up to $400 off special travel destinations
5% off books, music, movies & more
Free cell phones

Introducing the NEW

NEA Consumer Discount Program

Start saving today. To learn about the deals and savings available, visit neamb.com/free1 and receive a FREE magazine subscription, just for being a member.

nea Member Benefits

neamb.com

HELPING MAKE MEMBERS' LIVES BETTER℠

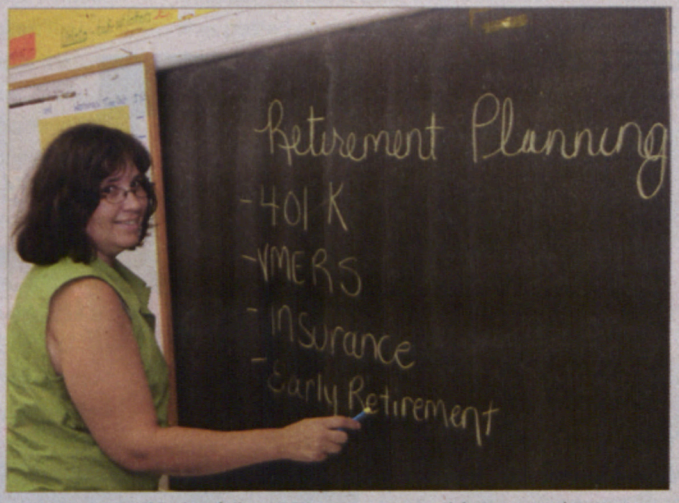
DPNT1106

Closing the Pension Gap

ESPs fight for equity in their retirement plans.

In 1988, when Loriann Darrell went to work for Vermont's Springfield School District, her pension wasn't even a blip on her radar. "I was in my early 20s and not thinking about retirement," says Darrell, an instructional assistant at Gateway School.

For the next eight years, Darrell worked part-time. Working fewer than the required 30 hours a week, she did not qualify for retirement coverage through the state-administered Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System (VMERS). Just as important, she remained woefully unaware of pension plans—until she met a fellow education support professional (ESP) who had worked 20 hours a week for about 20 years.



Loriann Darrell helps fellow ESPs strategize golden years planning.

"She retired with no benefits, except, I assume, Social Security," Darrell recalls. "If I knew then what I know now, I would have looked for more hours when I started working."

For the past decade, Darrell's full-time work at Gateway has provided her with a defined-benefit pension plan that will pay her about $841 a month after she retires at age 62 in 2024. "My mortgage will be paid," she says, "but I may still need other sources of income."

While teachers in all 50 states have access to some sort of retirement plan, an NEA study found significant coverage gaps between teachers and ESPs, particularly in Connecticut, Maine, North Dakota, and Vermont, where only 10 percent of ESPs have retirement benefits. Darrell is now co-chair of the Vermont-NEA ESP Retirement Study Committee. Formed in 2003, the group recommends improvements and helps Vermont locals bargain for the same rights as teachers.

"We're advocates," says Darrell, a member of the Springfield Support Staff Association. "Most ESPs look at their work as a career. With that should come job and pension security."

According to NEA's 2004 study, *The Status of Retirement Coverage for ESPs,* support professionals are generally covered by retirement plans or systems in 46 states. In 32 states where individual districts provide retirement coverage, teachers and ESPs are usually covered by the same plan. In other states, ESP retirement plans depend on employees' job classifications. In some, the state requires support professionals to be covered in a different system than teachers. In others, individual districts have the option of joining the statewide system; when they don't, coverage gaps can arise.

ESPs usually have more immediate worries than retirement, however. "Salary increases and livable wages are the biggest concerns," says Vermont-NEA President Angelo Dorta. "It's hard for them to think about retirement benefits when they're having trouble meeting living expenses today."

But low pay today also translates into more meager pensions down the road. Given that defined-benefit pensions are usually calculated based on final average earnings, ESPs often receive relatively low benefits throughout retirement. Full-time ESPs earn an average of $25,616, according to the 2005 *NEA ESP Databook.* About one-quarter of all ESPs nationwide work less than 30 hours a week, and nearly 7 in 10 earn less than $25,000 a year.

NEA's retirement study encourages state Associations to take these steps:

ADVOCATE FOR mandatory coverage of ESPs by a retirement system or plan that provides a guaranteed benefit without assuming risk, such as defined-benefit pension plans, which guarantee a set monthly income upon retirement.

WORK WITH LEGISLATORS, school board members, and other policymakers in states where coverage gaps exist.

LOBBY FOR INCREASED wages for ESPs through initiatives such as NEA's living wage campaign. (For more on the campaign, go online to www.nea.org/pay.)

USE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING to push for full-time positions or full benefits for part-time employees.

As Darrell looks ahead nearly two decades, she expects that equity built up in her home and a part-time job will help finance her retirement. But she wishes she'd invested sooner in a pension.

"The sooner you pay into a system, the better off you are," she says.

—JOHN ROSALES

More ESP stories in this issue:

> Putting the squeeze on Idaho custodians – *Page 12*
> New contract brings more money for Texas ESPs – *Page 20*
> Salary stories: Why ESPs need a living wage – *Page 34*

PHOTO: JON OLENDER

The NEA Professional Library...

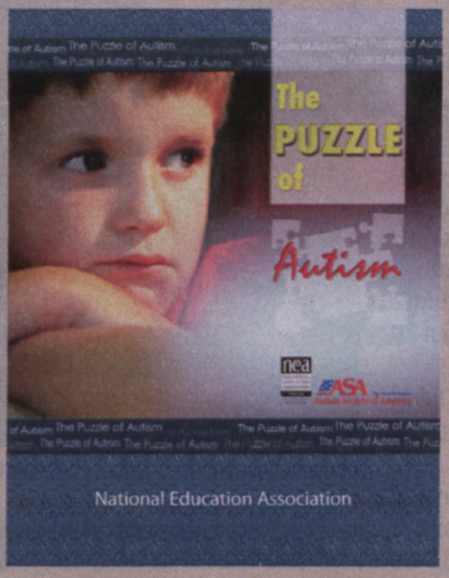
THE Bookstore for Educators

NEW from the NEA Professional Library!

The Puzzle of Autism

What educators should know . . .

What educators can do . . .



35 pp.
Item #1148-1-00-D
NEA Members $6.95
Nonmembers $11.95
Shipping charges will be added to each order

Now from the NEA Professional Library

www.nea.org/books 1.800.229.4200

NEA Professional Library—THE Bookstore for Educators

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Great Public Schools for Every Child

Something To Talk About

English-only laws are restricting more than just what's being said.

BY REBECCA L. WEBER

Zachariah Rubio unintentionally made national news last year when a peer asked him—in Spanish—to borrow a dollar. "No hay problema," he replied, a quip that got him suspended from his Kansas City, Kansas, high school. Although the superintendent soon revoked the punishment, the incident reflects the changing nature of bilingual education.

About half of all states now have some form of English-only statute or constitutional amendment in place—at a time when more people than ever before live in homes where English is not spoken. Some 14 million of them are children, and in a growing number of places, lawmakers are changing the way they learn English.

In California and Massachusetts, students have just a year to get up to speed before completing the rest of their coursework in English. Arizona—where one in four residents is Hispanic—has the strongest English-only education laws, all but barring teachers from using non-English words.

Bilingual educators in these states find themselves having to follow the letter of such laws. "It is anti-immigration," says Tempe, Arizona, elementary school teacher Nidia Lias of the policies that prohibit her from speaking Spanish to her students. Her colleague, Molly Cota, had to remove all the Spanish-language materials from her classroom. Teaching aides now translate only on a limited basis, and simple clarifications are mostly a thing of the past. Mentioning the dyeing of eggs led to confusion for one of Cota's first-graders, who asked, "¿Como se puede morir los huevos?" (How can the eggs die?)

Some English-language learners (ELLs) have also been shifted out of specialized classrooms. Cota now has half a dozen in a class of 22; the rest are divided equally among other teachers—some of whom, she says, have not been trained adequately in bilingual methods such as total body response and emphasis on visuals. "A weekend class is not going to do it," says Lias, who compensates in her sixth-grade classroom by using color-coded number lines posted on the walls, constant repetition, and pointing. "I spent years working on my ELL, and my colleagues did, too."

When it comes to learning a language, kids are like sponges. Immerse them in English, and they'll be fluent in no time—or so goes the conventional wisdom.

English-only advocates say that assimilation and mastering English are crucial to success in school, the workforce, and society. But children who can speak English on the playground can't necessarily comprehend grade-level academic content in English. Research suggests that kids will eventually become more proficient in both English and their mother tongue if they first become literate in their home language. A report sponsored by the National Literacy Panel for Language Minority Children, for instance, found that students with native language instruction fare better than English immersion students do.

English-only laws are also making it more difficult to attract bilingual education students to the profession, in part because they're leery of environments where speaking another language is considered a liability, says Jill Kerper Mora, an NEA member who teaches education at San Diego State University.

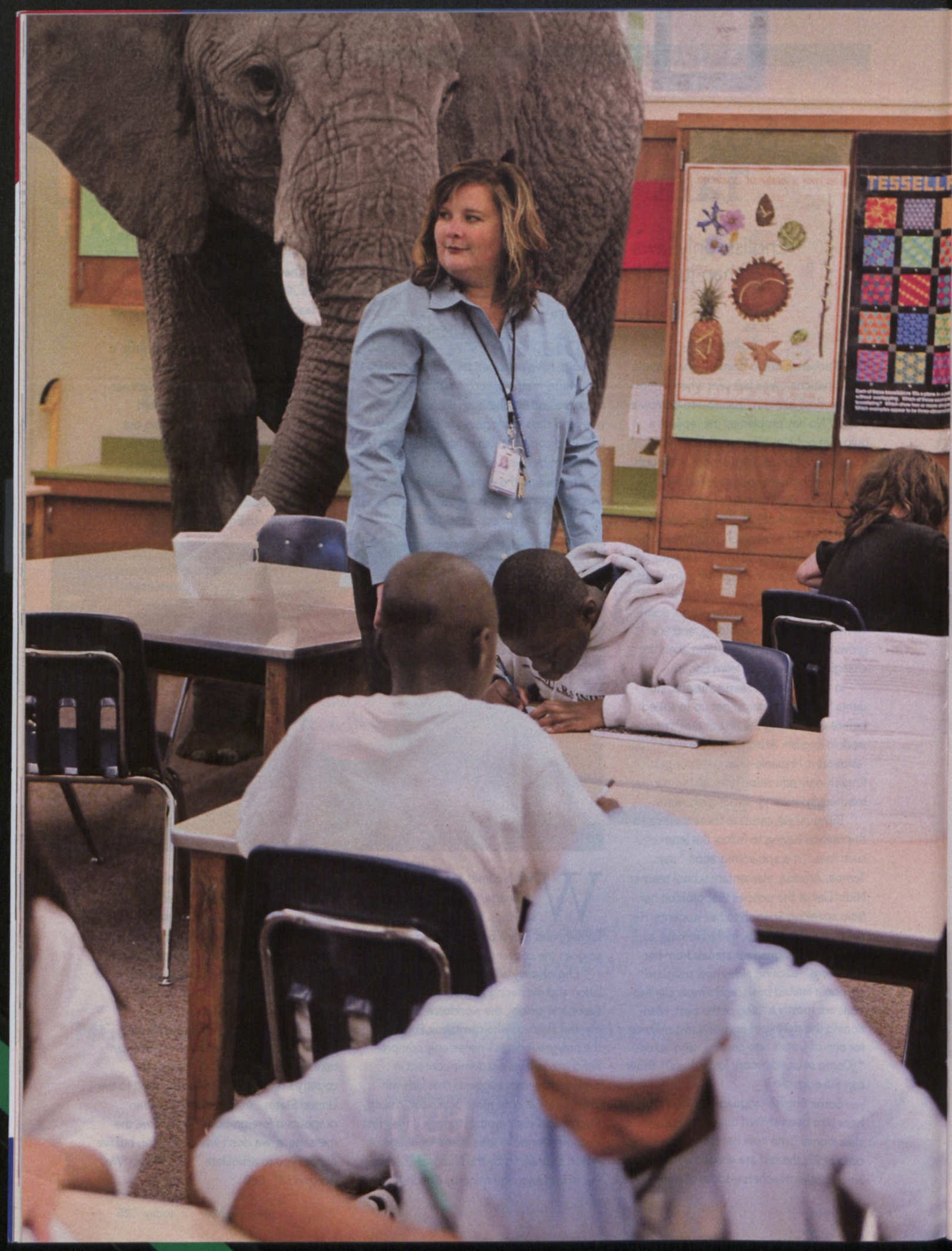
The laws are also causing confusion. In Massachusetts, local—and changing—interpretations of sheltered English immersion (SEI) have caused schools to shift between mainstreaming and pulling out ELLs. Educators have, at different times, been offered work as lower-paid tutors, shuffled between buildings, or laid off.

Still, ELL teachers acknowledge the surface appeal of English-only laws. "Even somebody who has been teaching for a while [who's] not exposed to second language learners, and hasn't been educated in the process of learning a second language, [wouldn't understand that] it takes years to achieve an academic language," says Leah Palmer, an SEI teacher in Brockton, Massachusetts.

Given high-stakes testing and other pressures, that gradual learning curve can take a toll. While just 8 percent of the country's teenagers have immigrated to the United States, almost one in four teen dropouts is foreign-born. "Right now, the message is, we don't want you here, but we expect you to assimilate," says Mora. "Well, which is it?" nea

English-only laws have forced Arizona teacher **Molly Cota** to remove all Spanish-language materials from her classroom.

PHOTO: JEFF TOPPING


TESSELL

IT'S THERE:

Talk About It

Race and poverty don't need to be the elephants in the classroom. As culturally responsive teaching takes root, these issues can actually help your students learn.

BY CYNTHIA KOPKOWSKI

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM IN MONA MENDOZA'S CLASSROOM.

"How many consider this ghetto?" she asks her middle school students in response to the reading passage they're working through, which focuses on a girl being slighted at a party because she is Latina and low-income. More than three-quarters of Mendoza's students at Meany Middle School in Seattle are ethnic minorities. She follows her initial question with, "Give me some examples of behavior that seems ghetto." Her students, who had been following along with the assignment quietly, snap to attention. Suddenly, almost everyone has something to say. Discussion quickly turns to stereotypes and how many of them had experienced racism or been slighted for being poor.

Talking with students about sometimes painful personal experiences connected to their race or economic standing did not come easy. But as the head of the school's diversity committee, a veteran teacher, and a minority, Mendoza's more comfortable than most treading this potentially rocky path. She believes connecting with students' personal backgrounds—a method known as culturally responsive teaching—is the key to closing achievement gaps at a school where the student body is 84 percent Black, Asian American, Hispanic, or American Indian, and 65 percent are poor.

Down the hall though, what is math teacher Wendy Miller to do? Can a White, middle-class teacher raised in a White, middle-class suburb, talk about race without being labeled a racist? Can she talk about the realities of the poverty in which many of her students live without being accused of being elitist? More to the point, why would she even want to risk it?

> **Teachers sometimes "feel that to bring up race makes them a racist. Race has become a four-letter word in schools."**
>
> —JACQUELINE JORDAN IRVINE
> EDUCATION RESEARCHER

Born and raised in Orange County, California, and the San Francisco Bay area, the 35-year-old teacher grew up attending schools with students who lived and looked like her. Like nearly half of the teachers at Meany, she came to the school fresh from college, and has around five years of teaching experience. Like 65 percent of the staff, she is Caucasian. Her preservice training didn't delve into culturally responsive teaching.

In her earliest days at Meany, the rookie stood before her math class and told them that minorities, especially those who are poor, face significant obstacles when it comes to academic success and college admissions. "I was really nervous about bringing up anything about race or socioeconomics," Miller says, adding that one thought always nagged: "Why would they listen to me?"

Miller isn't an anomaly. Eighty percent of preservice teachers are White females, setting up an unavoidable disparity between teacher and taught. While increasing the number of minority teachers nationwide is crucial, "the challenge is not to match the color of the kids they teach," says Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, an Emory University researcher and advocate for culturally responsive teaching. "The challenge is to find better ways to connect to the realities of what students know and live."

One unavoidable reality is the continuing achievement gaps. According to the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests, 13 percent of Black and 19 percent of Hispanic fourth-graders performed at or above proficiency in

Frank talks about race with fellow staffers were uncomfortable, but essential, for teacher **Wendy Miller**, shown here in her classroom.

PHOTO: JIM BRYANT; PHOTO COLLAGE: GROFF CREATIVE INC.; ILLUSTRATION: DAWN HUDSON

A day in teacher **Mona Mendoza's** classroom is rarely dull, whether it's due to a four-legged visitor or an earnest discussion of stereotypes that students encounter because of their race and economic status. Her students say they benefit when lessons relate to their own lives.

math, compared with 47 percent of their White counterparts; similar gaps existed among eighth-graders tested. When poverty is factored into NAEP math performance, there is a 22- to 27-point gap between poor and non-poor fourth- and eighth-graders, respectively. And given that minority groups now account for 12.4 percent of the population—and growing—it's an issue no longer relegated to select schools or states. "Because of the changing demographics of our schools, ignoring it is no longer an option," says Sheila Simmons, director of NEA Human and Civil Rights.

Nor is giving it lip service. Culturally responsive teaching is not about one lesson on Martin Luther King Jr. during Black History Month. It is not serving tacos in the cafeteria on Cinco de Mayo. Beyond heroes and holidays, it is about understanding students' home life, their language, music, dress, behavior, jokes, ideas about success, the role of religion and community in their lives, and more. It is bringing the experiences of their 24-hour day into the seven-hour school day to give them information in a familiar context. Like the teacher in Atlanta who conducts a geometry lesson by talking about geometric patterns in Mexican pottery and African kente cloth and has students bring in examples from home. Or the veteran Chicago teacher who uses "your mama" jokes (clean ones only, of course) to teach students about wordplay and advises fellow teachers that it's a viable way to help disadvantaged Black students decipher complex literary pieces they are exposed to in the classroom.

"We are teaching the whole child, not teaching in a vacuum," says Magda Costantino, a Washington researcher and academic who designed a reading curriculum that incorporates American Indian culture. "If we are serious about closing the achievement gap, we have to address the child within the context of his or her community." Costantino, along with Denny Hurtado, an American Indian education specialist, created their curriculum after searching for culturally appropriate lessons and discovering none existed.

In states like Washington, Oregon, and Wisconsin, there's been a move away from what Simmons calls "a more touchy-feely type of multicultural education that didn't have a strong framework" to more concrete policies and plans. In Seattle, work began in earnest four years ago and now reaches across the entire district. But none of this comes easily. "Some teachers don't feel there is a connection to make," Irvine says. Meany Middle School faculty member Robert Bernstein voices the opposition he sometimes hears: "'I'm spending a lot of time talking about race and not solving math problems.'"

> "I don't think you can move forward... if you're not uncomfortable."
>
> —WENDY MILLER
> TEACHER

More often, though, educators fear that they'll say or do something wrong. "They feel that to bring up race makes them a racist," Irvine says. "Race has become a four-letter word in schools."

IN THE LATE 1990S, HOWEVER, Meany Middle School's reputation was dismal and race could no longer be ignored. Test scores were low. Discipline problems were high. Although the neighborhoods surrounding it are now seeing more middle-class growth, they were then largely poor. Race and poverty are the most significant factors in Meany's students' performance, says principal Princess Shareef, so when Seattle Public Schools decid-

PHOTOS: JIM BRYANT; ILLUSTRATIONS: DAWN HUDSON

ed to start implementing culturally responsive teaching district-wide four years ago, her school was a ripe target for the improvement it could bring.

A series of corrosively uncomfortable meetings about race kicked off the staff's work. Called "Courageous Conversations," the sessions brought everyone from teachers to education support professionals (ESPs) to administrators into a room to share their ideas about personal and institutional racism and their own life experiences. One of the first questions posed by the mediator—"Does racism exist at Meany?"—had people shifting in their chairs and staring at the floor, Bernstein recalls. When they finally started talking, "people's different ranges of acceptance became evident," he says. Shareef remembers thinking that there wasn't much trust in the room. "Our feelings were pretty divided along racial lines," she says. The long-dormant feeling that a staff member from a different race couldn't possibly understand one's own experiences was now out and hanging in the air.

"I don't think you can move forward with effective culturally responsive teaching if you're not uncomfortable," Miller says. "It meant acknowledging that I don't know everything about other cultures, and that we aren't all the same. If you don't have a staff that's willing to go there, it won't work."

Unlike quick-hit diversity training seminars that merely skim the surface of race and economic status, these sessions marked the start of a lengthy journey. "It's a process over time," Miller says. "There's no way I would have shared things two years ago that I now feel comfortable discussing." Facilitators say the key is to not go too far too fast, or to accuse White, female teachers of being out of touch with their students. It's unfair, and "people will shut down then," Bernstein says.

Facilitators led similar conversations across the Seattle district as part of a systematic effort to bring issues of race and cultural identity out from under the rug. Faced with significant achievement gaps, administrators decided "we had to change because what we were doing was not working," recalls Caprice Hollins, director of the district's office of equity and race relations. That meant institutionalizing culturally responsive teaching, as well as considering all new policies, curriculum, and family outreach programs in the context of students' cultures.

"We're taking a customer service approach—how do we better understand our families?" says Hollins.

Sounds great, but how do I do it?

Reading about culturally responsive teaching is one thing, trying it in the classroom is quite another. Here's what the experts—and the teachers and ESPs just like you who have tried the approach—think you should know. Some of this may sound familiar, but consider how intensely you're delving into these methods.

Question Everything You Know

Start by asking yourself a few questions: Do I know the cultural background of each of my students? Do I integrate literature and resources from their cultures into my lessons? Do I consistently begin my lessons with what students already know from home, community, and school? Do I understand the differences between academic language and my students' social language, and do I find ways to bridge the two?

Contemplate the home life of the student who is sleepy-eyed or apathetic on a particular morning. Perhaps one of his family responsibilities is caring for a younger sibling or an after-school job. The student with the incomplete homework might be hobbled by her parents' inability to speak English. A student who doesn't turn in an assignment describing her house might be reluctant to admit in front of classmates that she lives in a homeless shelter.

"You can't fix most of these things," says researcher Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, "but knowing about them can help you make adjustments and provide support."

Consider cultural cues as well. In some cultures, making eye contact with authority figures or speaking loudly to them is considered disrespectful. "Students' frames of reference can clash with classroom norms," says American Indian education specialist Denny Hurtado. "Some Native Americans want to silently try to work on things before speaking," he says. "But teachers fear that they just don't want to participate."

Says Meany Middle School teacher Wendy Miller, "Examine your frame of reference." Or, as Irvine puts it, "Be curious."

Don't Just Guess or Fall Back on Old Assumptions

Instead, let students talk about elements of their culture, both positive and negative, removing the burden from you to speculate or ask questions that you fear might be too probing. You can start with an assignment that asks students to discuss their life outside of school. For instance, in NEA's educator guide *Culture, Abilities, Resilience, Effort: Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps*, teachers are urged to have students describe what they enjoy doing outside of school, with whom they spend most of their time, and whom they admire. Having children elaborate on their culture provides a shortcut to learn more about them, while they practice writing skills.

In one activity, students write about their culture's celebrations, greeting styles, beliefs about hospitality, the role of family, and attitudes about personal space

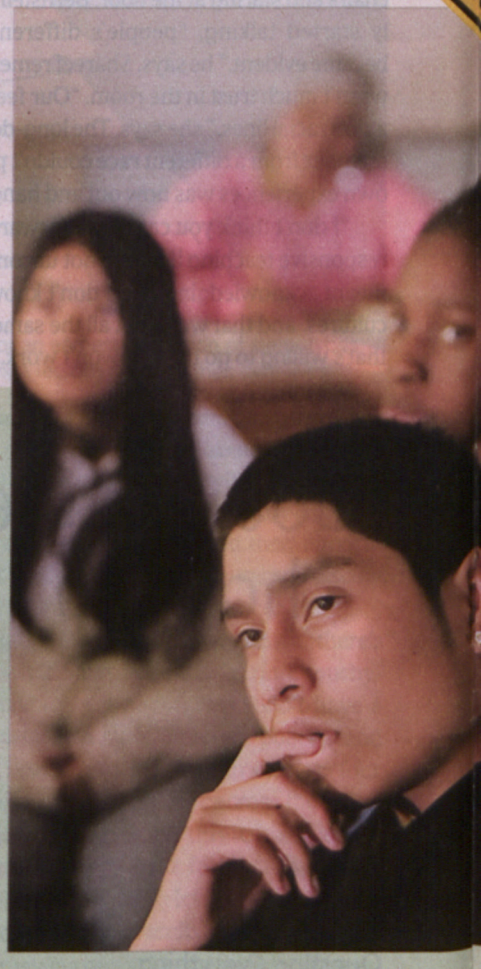
continues on page 30

Putting what's learned into practice runs the gamut from academics to parent-teacher conference times and locations, including meeting with parents in their homes and at community centers, to food service options. At Meany, "our cafeteria personnel focus on things as simple as acknowledging that Muslim students don't do pork, or that we may need more rice offerings," Shareef says. "They know these things."

FOUR YEARS LATER, IT'S CLEAR that approach has become deeply ingrained at Meany Middle School. As Mendoza continues working with her students on the birthday party reading passage, she stops to not only have students discuss the misconceptions about race and money its characters display, but also to quiz them on vocabulary. Mendoza then pushes even further, sharing a personal story about being snubbed by a salesclerk at a nearby department store, she believes, because she is Latina. Later, eighth-grader Brea Roberts confides that this type of teaching "makes me think about what happens outside of the classroom, instead of doing straight lessons. It stretches us."

In a nearby lab, science teacher Carol Furry acknowledges that "there is always a little bit of a challenge to find the relevance." But when discussing certain scientific discoveries and principles, she tells her students about minorities who deserve credit. Modern-day scientists and researchers, such as famed neurosurgeon Benjamin Carson, come up in the context of lab assignments and chapter work. If the day's lesson focuses on health, she discusses the prevalence of diabetes, heart disease, and glaucoma in poor and minority communities. When Furry finds herself lacking for ideas, she relies on technology: "With the Web, you're never at a dead end," she says. Her initial anxiety that parents would be upset by any approach to teaching that uses race and economic status subsided, Furry says. "If they didn't like what I was sending home, I'd hear about it."

Language arts and social studies teacher Sarah Lockenvitz focuses on having students explore their



continued from page 29

and privacy. Another has them pen short descriptions of the languages they speak, the music they listen to, the foods they eat at home, what is considered polite and rude in their family, what manners they have been taught, what they wear on special occasions, and what role extended family plays in their life. Imagine how much of an ice-breaker such an activity could be.

Get Out of the Classroom

Irvine believes the first step toward cultural competency is heading out into students' neighborhoods. "Go to their homes, go to the African-American churches, go to the Hispanic community centers." But proceed respectfully. "You have to have cultural ambassadors," Irvine says, pointing to fellow staff members, community leaders, or a parent with whom the teacher already has a connection as potential liaisons. "You have to be invited in. Don't just show up to an African-American church like it's a field trip." Each semester, Irvine, who is Black, brings her teaching students to such gathering places in Atlanta. "Once teachers made the effort, the respect for them rose," she says. Stepping into new environments is rarely easy, but can pay significant dividends. "We have to step outside of our comfort zones and push ourselves," says NEA's Denise Alston. "It will make a difference to the child."

Parent-teacher meetings are valuable tools, but the culturally responsive teacher moves beyond the traditional framework for such get-togethers, considering, for example, the schedule of parents working more than one job. Find out if your district has translators or cultural interpreters available and invite them to attend. Or consider meeting with parents at a location in their community.

In Seattle, grant money—including a $250,000 grant from the NEA Foundation—helps pay for teachers to spend days out in the community, familiarizing themselves with the culture of the students it sends to school.

Teach Them Using What They Already Know

Consider your minority and low-income students' experiences as valuable tools, not deficits, says Alston. It's called an "assets-based model," and it means taking what others might discount as problems for the child—poverty, English as a second language—and viewing them as building blocks for perseverance and resilience.

Using your newly widened frame of reference (remember the first point?), try recalibrating your lessons to match their experiences. For instance, when giving a geography lesson, use the names and patterns of students' neighborhood streets. In social studies, do a substantial unit on South America, Africa, or Asia, inviting students to talk about what they know about the lands from which their families hail. Have your math students write a rap song to describe a principle, such as how to reduce fractions. If your elementary school students use public transportation, have them bring in bus or subway schedules and use them as the focal point for a lesson on time or map reading. "It says to a child, 'You bring something,'" says Alston, "and it lets you build on that."

East Haven, Connecticut, teacher Joseph Marangell's ninth-grade history students spend the first five minutes of the period

own cultures, sharing what they know about them and talking about how it informs their lives. And in the library, media specialist Susan Jenkins stocks her shelves with as many multicultural books as possible, including reference material focusing on distinguished minority leaders in multiple fields, works of fiction by and about minorities, and books on such issues as bullying, teen pregnancy, and child abuse. "Through what kids are reading, they can see their own lives reflected," Jenkins says. Throughout the year, the library is also a gathering spot for parents and students who attend special sessions highlighting the student body's different cultures.

Despite Seattle's top-to-bottom adoption of a culturally responsive approach, "we have wonderful teachers and leaders who don't get it," Hollins says. Not because they're bad teachers. Rather, "they think that this should be a colorblind society where race doesn't—or shouldn't—matter." But when teachers see how the approach works, Irvine says, "they believe it."

Miller's seen it in her students' level of engagement. Her peers, in turn, point to her as evidence that a White, middle-class teacher can reach students who don't look like her. Miller, who openly acknowledges that she once worried about appearing racist just by bringing race up, has gained confidence. Still, the memories of those first uncomfortable days are still powerful enough to bring an expression of mock horror to her face as she recalls them. But, she adds, "kids know reality, and they understand I'm not pointing out anything that isn't true. It's adults who don't want to talk about race and money." nea

Want to learn more? Head to www.nea.org/crt to:

SEE IT IN ACTION: Check out video clips and lesson plans from a DVD that incorporates American Indian culture into a reading curriculum. The DVD's creator says the lessons can easily be adapted to engage students of other cultures.

ASK THE EXPERTS: Pose your questions about the teaching method to researchers and middle school educator Wendy Miller, who has made it work for her in the classroom.

GET EXTRA RESOURCES: Check out a list of books and programs that offer more guidance on culturally responsive teaching.

writing in journals "about issues relevant to both their own lives and the history curriculum," he says. The East Haven High students then share their writing, "providing a springboard for each day's lesson."

Use the Work of Those Ahead of You

Don't try to reinvent the wheel when it comes to selecting appropriate books or lesson plans. Hurtado recalls the day he decided to talk about American Indian canoes in conjunction with a reading lesson and opened a book on the topic. The pictures misidentified American Indian tribes—something he, as a member of the Skokomish Tribe, quickly spotted, but someone else might not have realized.

With that in mind, he and partner Magda Costantino did the heavy lifting, designing their American Indian reading curriculum on a DVD that contains reading passages, photos, and video clips, including interviews with tribal elders. This fall, the pair is adapting the program for the U.S. Department of Education to use nationwide. A similar effort is in full swing in Wisconsin, where members of the state's 11 tribes have partnered with the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) in developing a culturally responsive education package. Supported with NEA and WEAC grants, the package includes a teacher's guide, DVDs, posters, and magazines. (Head to www.nea.org/crt for more culturally responsive teaching tools.)

Reach out to those who have come before you, too. Within the Black community, retired teachers can be tapped as a resource to share their strategies for reaching ethnic minorities. "There are people out there who know how to do it," says Irvine. "We need to find them."

Know That You're Supported

For NEA, promoting culturally responsive teaching is not subject to the fickle winds of education reform. It's part of the Association's resolutions, which state clearly that ethnic-minority teachers must be involved in selecting educational materials and those resources should contain points of view that realistically portray ethnic minorities' lives. NEA plans to allocate $200,000 over the next two years to promote adoption of cultural competence standards for educators in five policy arenas affecting educator preparation, induction, and professional development.

Tap into Lesson Plans

Culturally responsive lessons available in books and online can often be adapted to address different cultures and different grades. "Make it personal for your students," says Hurtado, and "work with your local communities so it's authentic."

For example, the book *Teaching About Asian Pacific Americans* offers an adaptable business and marketing lesson. Students select a magazine and compare the number of ads featuring Asian-American models with the total number of ads, and describe the product and company that these models promote. Students then discuss or write about how the ad maintains or breaks stereotypes. Does it have derogatory images or language? Students are asked how they might recreate the ad.

VISIT WWW.NEA.ORG/CRT for additional examples of lessons geared toward American Indians, Blacks, and Hispanics.

PHOTOS: JIM BRYANT; ROAD SIGN PHOTO: BOB AINSWORTH

Taking Root

BY JOHN ROSALES

School gardens help cultivate a healthy mindset.

Some people like to whistle while they dig in a garden. Eight-year-old Spencer likes to talk.

"Where's my water?' he says to no one in particular.

"I killed a centipede. What the heck is this—a sand rock?"

"I found a worm."

On a brilliant spring day, Spencer and a dozen of his equally inquisitive second-grade classmates are tending one of several student-run gardens at Will Rogers Elementary School in California's Ventura Unified School District. Beyond the garden plot where the students are working, apple, plum, avocado, and citrus trees line the school's high fence. The cool ocean air—the Pacific is only a half-mile away—and friendly West Coast temperatures make for consistently bountiful harvests.

But the students are doing more than cultivating their green thumbs in the year-round flower and vegetable gardens. They're also developing healthy eating habits that can keep them fit now and throughout their lives.

"It's important to catch them at an early age," says Brendan Freeman, a school gardening coordinator who works with the 25 schools participating in the district's Healthy Schools project. "I've had the kids jumping up and down out there chanting 'broccoli! broccoli! broccoli!' I was sort of dumbfounded."

At Will Rogers, the fruits of the students' efforts often wind up on their plates. Some of the peas, beans, lettuce, broccoli, tomatoes, and potatoes students grow on school grounds end up being washed, cooked, and "taste-tested" in class. Produce is also carried home by students and dispatched to the cafeteria kitchen, where it's prepped and placed on the salad cart alongside farm-fresh products from local growers.

But it all starts in the 10-foot by 10-foot plot where Spencer is working this morning. "Worms eat dirt," he says, still talking nonstop. "When they potty, it helps the dirt. Same with cow manure—hey, I just buried a snail for compost."

When not gardening, Spencer and his classmates can be found reading books about soil management, the history of strawberries, and the importance of worms. *Diary of a Worm* is one of the most popular books in the second-grade classroom of Kris Guzman, who has been the school's garden coordinator for 11 years.

"There's nothing like giving kids a shovel and having them churn soil," she says. "I want my kids to understand what it takes to work a garden, so they can do it at home and later as adults."

Guzman's classroom resembles a college botany lab. An extensive collection of children's gardening and biology books crowd the front-wall bookshelves. There's a shiny aluminum sink in the back for washing leafy vegetables, and an imposing aquarium near the windows, allowing light to shower over a colorful selection of plants, caterpillars, and newly hatched butterflies.

Things are growing everywhere in and around the classroom. Beans and pumpkin seeds are cultivating in plastic dishes on tables, while potted plants labeled with student names line the windowsill. Just outside the back door is a patio garden and a four-foot high compost pile of soil, grass, coffee grinds, and other discards that help reinvigorate dry dirt.

"I saw a teacher throw a banana peel in it," Spencer recalls.

Garden tools, water hoses, and pails are stored in a compact shed near Guzman's garden plot, once a weed patch where custodians dumped gray water. The only element missing from the scene is pesticides, which Guzman doesn't allow. Instead, she employs an "integrated pest management" system, which depends on nature's own bugs, birds, and bees.

"We let insects help the garden grow," she says.

After settling into his routine of digging, watering, and churning—"not turning"—the soil, Spencer reflects. "I like school because you get to garden—and eat strawberries," he says.

The taste-testing sessions are a key component of the Healthy Schools project. As students harvest and cook their own produce, they also analyze the vitamins contained in fruits, the origins of vegetables, and the natural environment and seasons in which they flourish. During classroom presentations, farmers, chefs, and nutrition experts also expose students to the range of issues involved in living a healthy lifestyle.

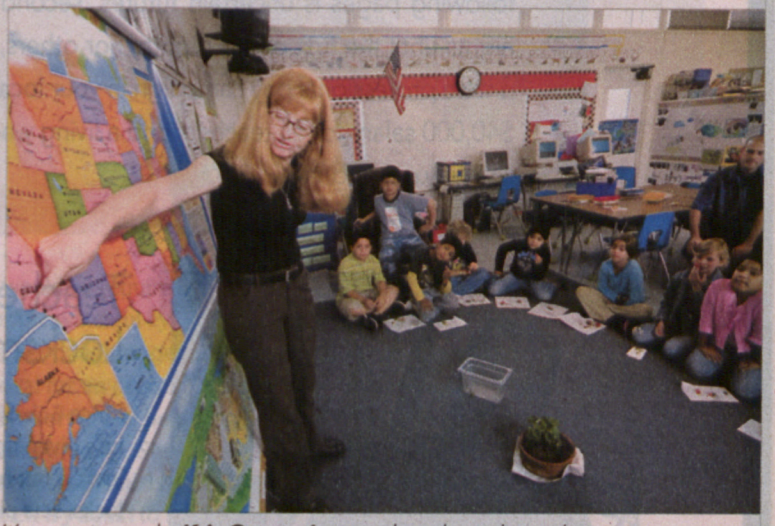
"We're building a mindset," says Guzman. "We want the kids to protect our earth and to think and eat healthy."

The Ventura project began in 2001 as a collaboration between local farmers, the PTA at Juanamaria Elementary School (where the pilot program was launched), and the district. Local nonprofits and businesses also helped by donating materials, expertise, and money. Funded primarily by the district, the project does more than just teach students to make healthy food choices and how to tend a garden.

"We don't pick everything, in order to teach the kids a complete life-cycle of a plant," says Freeman. He and another part-time specialist assist teachers and students with the gardens, work with local farmers who sell their produce to the school, and generate revenue for the project through grant writing. "We also show children the relationship between food and the environment and the agriculture industry," he adds.

Freeman stresses the importance of knowing about dietary and obesity issues, such as cholesterol levels, greasy foods, and plaque. He also extols the virtues of exercise; students sometimes receive a piece of fruit after running laps. Freeman, who focuses on students from kindergarten through fifth grade, believes in developing good work and eating habits at this age level. "Then you can have fifth-graders mentor the second-graders," he says.

The ripple effect also extends beyond the school walls. Given coastal California's temperate—and frostless—climate, produce grows year-round in the gardens, bringing in parent and community volunteers. "There is a lot of Saturday and summer work involved," Freeman says. Behind a locked fence on the campus perimeter is the school's showcase science garden, which was built by a Boy Scout troop and Will Rogers students. "Peppers and tomatoes ripen all summer here," Freeman says. "Parents take home the summer produce in exchange for pulling weeds and watering."



It's never too early: **Kris Guzman's** second-grade students plant, harvest, and eat their own food, learning a little science, history, and healthy eating habits along the way.

One of the parents, Oriana Gonzalez, was recruited by her daughter, Elora, and now volunteers a few days a week in Guzman's class. "My daughter was so excited about the school garden that we were inspired to do our own garden at home," she says. "The salad bar makes eating fun for the kids. They can create their own plate. It gives them a sense of independence." nea

PHOTOS: JEFF FASSETT; ILLUSTRATIONS: LINDA HOLT AYRISS

WHY MONEY M

Some educators live in shelters. Others work five jobs to make ends meet. And for all of us, a lack of professional pay shortchanges our schools.

BY MARY ELLEN FLANNERY

Do you make enough money?

Stop laughing.

Of course, you probably don't—not for what you do, how you do it, and the years of preparation and education that went into it. New teachers in America can expect to earn about $31,408 a year, according to a recent study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. Compare that with $51,162 for similarly educated new field engineers or $44,345 for registered nurses.

And it's not getting any better. Teacher salaries have risen a scant 0.8 percent since 1996, says the Economic Policy Institute. That's a whole lot less than the 12 percent increase other college-educated workers have enjoyed over the same period.

What those numbers mean for the six teachers and education support professionals (ESPs) on the following pages is uncertain futures, second jobs (maybe third, fourth, and fifth jobs), and sleepless nights until the first of the month. For others, it means leaving the profession. It also can mean signing onto a professional pay campaign in your local Association or joining NEA's efforts to ensure a minimum $40,000 salary for all teachers and a living wage for education support professionals. To learn more, go to www.nea.org/pay.

PHOTO: DAVID BARNES

Teacher by day. Locksmith by night.

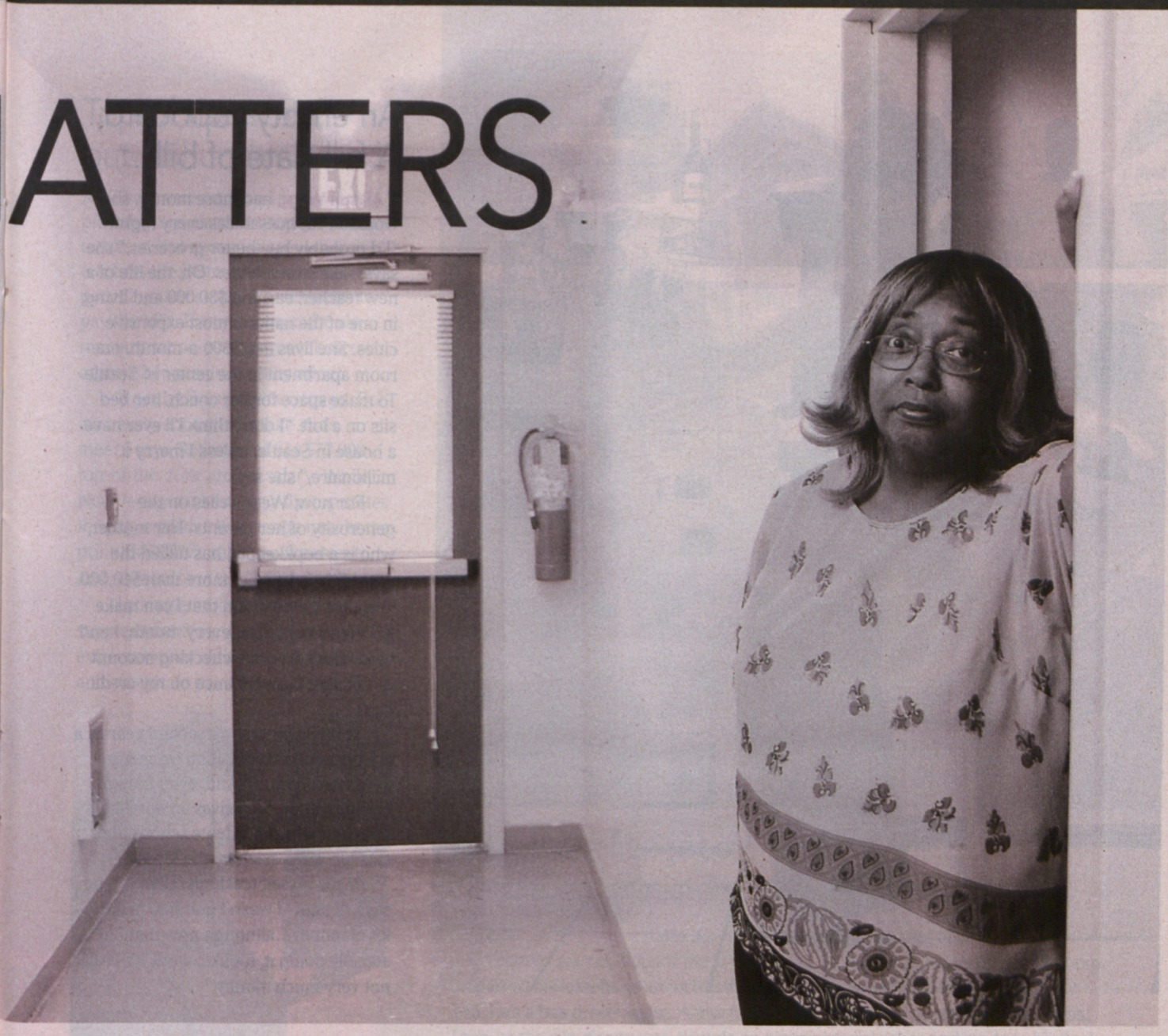
Since **Bob Moehlig** became a father, he's given up on the midnight runs to locked-out homes, but he still spins locks, sets pins, and opens doors on weekends and summer days. He has to—he and his wife, another teacher, need the extra cash from his second job to pay their bills.

After nine years of teaching math to the "kings of middle school" (the eighth-graders, that is) in Glenwood, Illinois, Moehlig makes just $41,000—less money than he did in his first job in accounting—"and that was 10 years ago!" he adds.

"For us, the first thing is the kids, making sure they get what they need," he says of his 5-year-old son and 7-year-old daughter. That means Christmas savings accounts, used cars, and no vacations—not the kind involving bathing suits, anyway. He and his wife usually serve as delegates to NEA's Representative Assembly in July, and sometimes they tack on an extra day to visit the local sites. (This year, the kids got lucky—it was Disney in Orlando!)

In June, he gets paid for the entire summer. But, "by August, it's peanut butter and jelly for lunch and dinner," he says.

ATTERS



Can you afford hope on $804?

This is not an urban legend: There are actually NEA members who make so little money that they live in homeless shelters. **Debbie Ennels** is one of them.

As a classroom aide, Ennels takes home $804 a month. She's willing to spend half of that on rent. But this past summer, when Ennels' landlord sold her apartment building, she couldn't find any place on Maryland's Eastern Shore for so little. She and her 15-year-old grandson were on their way to...who knows, maybe sleeping in her car, when a co-worker suggested the Village of Hope.

Now Ennels and her teenager live with recovering addicts, recent parolees, and others who say their lives are "in transition." It's cheap—the charity in charge asks for 30 percent of her take-home pay. In return, she follows their rules. Curfew is at 10 p.m. In her tiny one-bedroom, there's no phone. If she wanted to visit with a male friend, they would be required to meet in the "common room," under the watchful eye of the front desk clerk. This fall, when her daughter gets married, she will need to get approval for an overnight pass.

"It's sort of like being in jail," Ennels says grimly. And yet, she's grateful. She can stay in the Village for two years, work on finishing her college degree in education, and then try again to find a place for $402 a month.

In the meantime, working down the street at Chipman Elementary with the youngest, most needy, worst-behaved, and best-loved (at least by her) students is her passion. She's got kids who can't smile; she's got kids who cuss her out.

"I look at them like they're my children. And I think, 'What would I want for my own kids?' So I'm hard on them. I practice tough love....I've never been in it for the money," she says. "But the way my situation is now, I could use it."

PHOTO: SCOTT SUCHMAN

An empty cupboard, A full slate of bills.

If **Allison Wegg** had more money, she wouldn't eat quesadillas every night. "I'd probably buy better groceries," she says—like strawberries. Oh, the life of a new teacher, earning $30,000 and living in one of the nation's most expensive cities. She lives in a $500-a-month, one-room apartment in the center of Seattle. To make space for her couch, her bed sits on a loft. "I don't think I'll ever have a house in Seattle, unless I marry a millionaire," she says.

For now, Wegg relies on the generosity of her parents. Her mother, who is a bookkeeper, has tallied the cost of their loans at more than $10,000. "I want to show them that I can make it," Wegg says. "But every month, I end up overdrawing my checking account or taking a cash advance on my credit card."

This will be Wegg's second year as a full-time special education teacher in Kent, Washington. And, even though her job means she drives an unreliable car, can't afford graduate school, and eats too many nachos, she loves it.

"I see myself teaching forever," she says. "I knew I wasn't going to make a lot of money...although now that I'm actually doing it, it's like, wow, it's really not very much money!"

Talk about tough jobs.

Carol Neitzel, an Idaho Falls education support professional, works with the kids who bite their teachers, kick their classmates, and pick up their desks and fling them across the room.

"[Teachers] don't have time to deal with these problems," explains Neitzel, a behavioral specialist. "When they send them to me, I focus on getting their behavior back in order so they can go back to the classroom." For this work, Neitzel earns under $11 an hour. "Not very much," she concedes.

To make ends meet, Neitzel works at the local movie theater on weekends, earning $6 an hour selling tickets to such fare as *Snakes on a Plane*. At times, she also works for the county's election office, earning $8 an hour. Her husband, who is disabled, is unable to work.

"I've had children who have been wards of the state, taken away from their parents and considered 'unadoptable,' but because of the work that I did, and others, too, they've been able to leave the state hospital and be placed with foster families," she says. "But the state doesn't value what we do—and until they do, they won't put a proper price tag on it."

PHOTO TOP: STEVE SHELTON; BOTTOM: ROBERT BOWER

Top of the scale, but still undervalued.

A 27-year veteran, **Yolanda Gutierrez** probably makes more money than most teachers. But even in places where teachers are better compensated than peers in other states, it's still tough to pay the bills. Every summer, the elementary school teacher must borrow against her pension to stay afloat.

"I get by. I pay my mortgage. But it's barely enough to make ends meet," says Gutierrez of her $73,000 top-of-the-scale annual salary. While New Jersey ranks among the top states for pay, consider its average new home price ($488,917), sales tax (6 percent), and state income tax (6.5 percent).

The single mother relies on salary supplements from at least three extracurricular clubs, including drama and chorus, to pay the bills. Then, in

what little time is left in her day, instead of another paid job, she takes on leadership positions with her local and state Association. "In other words, I have to sacrifice to do what's best for me as an Association member."

Her daughter, who is 20, flirts with the idea of teaching—but with tepid enthusiasm from mom. "It's a noble profession, but we don't make enough money, and we don't get the respect given to any other professional.... Frankly, I want something better for my child."

One man, five jobs: He drives, ministers, mentors, and more.

At 6 a.m., **Jerry Parham** starts his school bus, checks the tires and other safety features, and warms it up for the kids. By 8:15, Parham is in his Virginia classroom, preparing his lessons as an instructional aide for special education students. At 3:15, he's a bus driver again. A few hours later, he's a paid mentor for local teens. Then, as the sun disappears, he puts on his ministerial robes and tends to his flock.

What's that—four jobs? Well, there's a fifth, too. He also works as a private driver for a tour bus company. And Parham is also a full-time college student, using community grants to help pay for his education degree. And did we mention that he's a leader in his local Association's campaign for a living wage? (For more information—or inspiration—see www.sussexlivingwage.org.)

"There's a lot going on in the typical day," he laughs. "I try to sleep three or four hours." When he's lucky, he pulls an extra driving shift, taking Sussex County's athletes to a game, and earns a little more cash. "I'll be sitting in the bleachers, attempting to do my homework."

After 10 years as a school bus driver, Parham earns $10,627 a year. After eight years as a classroom aide (a job that he "loves, loves, loves!"), he earns $16,128. It's not always easy to pay the bills for the tidy, red-shuttered house that he inherited from his mother. His monthly mortgage is $863; a recent electric bill added up to $226. (It's a good thing he grows his own apples in the backyard!)

And yet, he says, "Not everybody is as lucky as me." Another county bus driver relies on food stamps and forgos health insurance to pay the mortgage. One skipped a medical test to pay for groceries. He knows a guy who has been driving the bus for 47 years—and earns $13,000.

PHOTO LEFT: CRAIG MATTHEWS; PHOTOS RIGHT: D. KEVIN ELLIOTT

The spelling and grammar lesson in Steven Podoll's classroom is a little like the changing of the guard. "Fifth-graders, please come up," Podoll calls. Two students push back their chairs and rise to meet him at a table in the front of the room, passing two fourth-graders on their way back to their seats with their assignment. Half an hour later, two sixth-graders replace the fifth-graders. Finally, the seventh-grader is called up. And so it goes for math, science, reading, and the rest of the subjects the fourth- through eighth-graders in Podoll's class study at this two-classroom rural school in Baldwin, North Dakota.

The Baldwin School sits on a small hill in the center of "town"—just behind the hand-printed "Welcome to Baldwin" sign and across the railroad tracks from a white clapboard post office the size of a toolshed. It overlooks the wide northern plains that roll on for miles before meeting the sky.

The town itself lies on a country road east of Highway 83, about 15 miles into the sloping grasslands of the open prairie north of Bismarck. The population hovers around 54 or 55, according to the local postmaster. A community of farmers and ranchers, the people of Baldwin have for generations worked the land through storms, drought, grassfires, and blizzards. Like fluctuating crops of grain, the town has grown and flourished, withered and shrunk. But it's always endured, thanks in large part to the town school that first opened its doors in 1908.

For those who live in Baldwin and other small towns across the country's Great Plains, the prairie isn't just a place, it's a way of life—and one that may be drawing to a close as farmers sell off land and livestock, urban areas sprawl, and small towns dwindle. With them go the country schoolhouses that once dotted the landscape. North Dakota alone had more than 4,700 one-room schools in the early 1900s. Now only a handful remain, and as is the case elsewhere in the Midwest, state laws and declining populations are prompting many small schools to either consolidate or close.

Often, a town's school is its last foothold. When the school closes, the town dies. And that's exactly what the people of Baldwin hope to prevent. "If the school closed, it would be as if Baldwin suffered a stroke," says Podoll. "It might survive, but barely."

THIS YEAR, THERE ARE NO EIGHTH-GRADERS IN Podoll's class, which has just seven students—two each in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, and one seventh-grader, a tall, blonde girl named Tori, who often helps the younger students, including her sixth-grade brother, Travis. Next door in the K–3

Pi

classroom, fellow teacher Beth Duey has eight students—a few of them with siblings in Podoll's class.

Over the years, the population of the school has reflected the prosperity of the town. When it first opened in 1908, eight years after Baldwin was founded, teacher W.E. Yeater (gender not recorded) had 26 students and earned $50 a month. The population held steady through the teens and twenties, growing to 37 students in 1934—a class that, according to the records, included six "farm boys," six "farm girls," 12 "town boys," and 13 "town girls." Then the Dust Bowl spread northward and depression gripped the country. By 1937, just 11 students were enrolled in the Baldwin School.

Slowly, the town population rebounded. By the 1950s school enrollment was back in the 30s and 40s, but Baldwin was never the same. In its heyday, the town boomed with banks, hotels, grain elevators, a lumber yard, newspaper, train depot—even a dance hall. A series of fires razed many businesses, others simply closed their doors. Today, the center of town consists of a post office, a railroad track crossing, a handful of houses, and the Baldwin School.

That list might get shorter if North Dakota's state legislature passes a bill that would require elementary schools with fewer than 100 students to consolidate with a district that has a high school. After the eighth grade, Baldwin students currently have a choice between high schools in Bismarck to the south or the "bigger small town" of Wilton to the north.

Although the Baldwin school wouldn't immediately close—the town must vote whether to keep it open—residents feel the passage of S.B. 2333 would make it inevitable. "It's taxation without representation," says Podoll. "It would take local control of the school away from Baldwin, and it would divert property taxes to the [consolidated] district. Nobody in Baldwin wants this to happen. Everyone realizes that when you stop funding schools, towns suffer."

According to Marty Strange, policy director at the Rural Schools and Community Trust, a national nonprofit addressing the relationship between schools and communities, consolidation is "hot in areas with depressed rural economies and where urban areas are growing fast." Both descriptions fit Baldwin. A prolonged three-year drought has sapped local farmers, and the edge of Bismarck is creeping closer, with Baldwin sitting in the shadow of Bismarck's new Super Wal-Mart, a short 15-minute drive down the highway.

The argument for consolidation, Strange says, is that it lowers taxes for the citizens of rural towns and provides children with access to a wider array of classes and services. "But people know their local schools work," he says. "And rural

oneer Spirit

As small schools across the Northern Plains consolidate, a town fights to preserve its rural, two-room schoolhouse.

BY CINDY LONG

PHOTOS: NANCY KUEHN

America has paid through the nose for the privilege of having good schools in their communities. They've shown time and again that they're willing to sacrifice to keep them."

That's been the case in Baldwin, where town residents have repeatedly voted to raise their mill levies to keep the school open, according to Gerry Ann Small, an aide at the Baldwin School. Her husband and three children attended the school, and she's quick to point out that all of her kids remained on the honor roll in high school after graduating from Baldwin. "Our kids get a solid education here," she says. "A Bismarck teacher once told me she could always pick out the country kids—they were ready to study, polite, and always willing to help their neighbor," she says.

The legislation is coming up for a vote again this year, and "they're in for another fight," says Small. "This school is the heart and soul of our community."

On the first day of school, the local Veterans of Foreign Wars chapter visits the Baldwin School for the first flag-raising of the year (the flag pole was donated by the VFW in honor of five Baldwin soldiers killed in the Vietnam War). In December, the town gathers at the school for its holiday program, and the students go caroling from farmhouse to farmhouse, where they're greeted with warm cookies or cider. For Valentine's Day, grandparents are invited to school for breakfast. The students even organized a Youth Citizen's League so they could volunteer within the community. They raised money to help a newlywed couple whose home burned down, for a local firefighter badly injured on the job, and to buy clothing and winter gear for needy children.

And then there are the basketball games. Two coed teams—fourth through eighth grade, and second through third, compete against four other rural schools in Burleigh County. The first-graders are the cheerleaders, complete with uniforms and pom-poms. "When the Baldwin Bullets play, that gym is plum full with folks from town," Small says.

One of their most loyal fans is the postmaster, Gail Gordon, who was born in Baldwin in 1942 and has lived there ever since. Gordon believes the school, like the post office, is central to Baldwin's small-town character. "When a small town loses its school or its post office, it loses its identity," she says.

Gordon's father was the postmaster when she started out as a clerk in 1958. Before the building was converted into a post office, it was St. John's Lutheran Church (the pulpit is still intact). Before it became a church, it was a "rolling schoolhouse" that sat perched atop timbers and was pulled by horses from field to field where farm children could take a break for their lessons. When Gordon stands at her counter, she looks out at the present-day school yard, where she can watch the kids play during recess. "I went to school there, my dad went to school there, and my daughter went to school there," she says. "It's always been a fine school."

It still is. The students benefit from a low student-teacher ratio; access to technology (there's nearly one computer for every student, all with wireless Internet connections); a built-in tutoring system with older kids helping younger students; and a sense of community that's difficult to develop in larger schools. And because there is just one teacher for

Left: With a low student-teacher ratio, **Steven Podoll** can spend extra time on student questions. Center: Fifth-grader Chantelle tolls the bell for the end of recess. Right: Third-grader Amber takes one last swing before coming in.

multiple grades, there's a consistency that allows the teacher to more effectively track progress, address problems, and become a support system.

"I teach one student for five years, every day, for five or six hours," Podoll says. "In a setting like this, these students become a member of your family. How can I not do my best to see these students succeed? How can I not care about them and their futures?"

THE START OF THE SCHOOL DAY IS ALMOST LIKE a scene from *Little House on the Prairie*. Podoll stands on the steps and rings a bell, alerting the kids playing in the school yard that it's time to come in for class. After the Pledge of Allegiance, the students each pull out their water bottles for a 20-second drink. "Why do we drink water each morning?" Podoll asks. "Because it goes straight to our brains," the kids chime back.

While most of the curriculum is broken down by grade, Podoll tries to find a few lessons appropriate for all levels. One is the lesson in daily oral language, where Podoll writes "bad" sentences on the board and the students find the mistakes. He also teaches the students a new word of the day—he got the idea the year he received a "Word of the Day" calendar for Christmas. The favorite all-class activity is the daily reading period, when Podoll reads aloud. "He always stops at a cliffhanger," says Small. "That way, the kids want to read the next chapter. He's really turned them on to reading."

Podoll grew up in Hazen, North Dakota, about an hour's drive from Baldwin. Valedictorian of his high school class of 53 students, he got a full academic scholarship to the University of North Dakota, where he studied communications with hopes of becoming an ESPN announcer, until he became "somewhat disillusioned with the behavior of the modern athlete." He decided to become a teacher, not only for the chance to work with kids, but also because he wanted to touch as many lives as possible.

"There hasn't been a day since that I've regretted the decision," he says. "Getting to know these kids and being an integral part of their lives is an experience that is at times impossible to describe."

His students have no such trouble describing him—and funny tops their list of adjectives. Podoll cracks jokes about canceling recess (the students check each day to make sure it's still on), he accuses the students of turning his hair gray (he's only 29), and he uses words like "ba-bada-bingo" when the kids nail an answer. He's also fond of practical jokes.

"He's fun and smart," says Chantelle, one of the two fifth-graders. She lives on a farm with 350 cattle, three horses, and "a bunch of cats and kittens." One of her daily chores is to feed and water the horses in the barn; her horse, Cody, is sorrel with a white blaze on his forehead. She also helps with the herd, giving shots to the calves. "I've been kicked a few times," she says.

She might stay in Baldwin and help her brothers with the farm when she grows up, or she might become a marine biologist. She's still deciding.

In the meantime, her grandmother drives her the 10 miles to school each day, and Chantelle says she couldn't imagine going anywhere else. "It's not too big. I like little schools," she says. "You get lots of help, the kids are nice—nobody is mean. I think it's the best education there is." nea

On the Web: View video from inside the two-room Baldwin School and a slide show of more images from the little schoolhouse on the prairie at www.neatoday.org.

For more information on rural education, visit www.nea.org/rural/.

PHOTOS: NANCY KUEHN

Plugging In

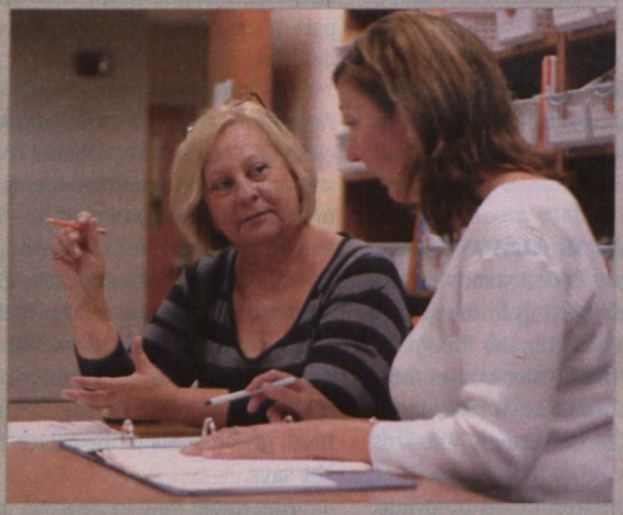
A digital literacy initiative in Indianapolis provided more than technology training. It created a community of learning for the district's teachers.

Across the Lawrence Township school district in Indianapolis, a collective groan greeted the prospect of another professional development initiative. For teachers in this 16,000-student district, past experiences have elicited all too familiar complaints: a "one size fits all" approach, a hit-or-miss topic they may never actually find the time to address in the classroom, or the visiting expert who is gone at the end of the day and never seen again.

"Quite frankly," says Betsy Wheatley, a teacher at Fall Creek Valley Middle School, "professional development is not something an average teacher looks forward to. But we knew soon after this new program started in 2002 that this was going to be different."

The new program was Lawrence Township's Digital Age Literacy Initiative, funded by a $5.9 million Lilly Endowment grant to promote "21st Century skills," primarily the integration of traditional reading and writing proficiency with technological literacy among students who are "growing up digital."

District officials understood that these skills couldn't be embedded in the classroom unless teachers were properly trained, so they turned to educators to train their peers.



Digital literacy coach **Sondra Shelton** (left) and teacher **Elizabeth Terando** prepare a lesson plan at Sunnyside Elementary in Indianapolis.

"We believed coaching to be one of the most effective methods of professional development," recalls Leona Jamison, the district's director of professional development, "so we set out to train a group of classroom teachers to become full-time coaches." In the process, they transformed Lawrence Township's 1,200 teachers into a learning community they expect to live on once the grant money dries up at the end of the school year.

Sondra Shelton, a digital literacy coach at Sunnyside Elementary, was one of many intrigued by the opportunity. "I had been reading articles about the coaching model," she says, "so I jumped at the chance."

Using the grant money, the district trained Shelton and more than 30 other coaches to work with teachers across all grade levels, emphasizing basic technological, visual, and informational literacy.

As the coaches entered their peers' classrooms, initial skepticism quickly turned to practical learning. They formed book clubs, study groups, and workshops as venues to collaborate and discuss new research and teaching strategies. A new Web network provided an easy way for educators to meet, talk, and take courses online. Just one month after the site launched in late 2004, more than 250 teachers had signed up for different online classes.

In addition to being exposed to new resources, teachers also learned how to collect, share, and analyze data to evaluate the impact of these new strategies. Writing workshops, for instance, were implemented at several different schools, and teachers played a direct role in assessing their effects on literacy skills.

Stephania Smith, a teacher at Harrison Hill Elementary, says the coaches' accessibility was the key in turning abstract training into concrete teaching skills. "[They] have been in the classroom, working directly with you to implement the strategies we learned in the workshops, study groups, and book clubs. I'm not looking forward to the end of the grant."

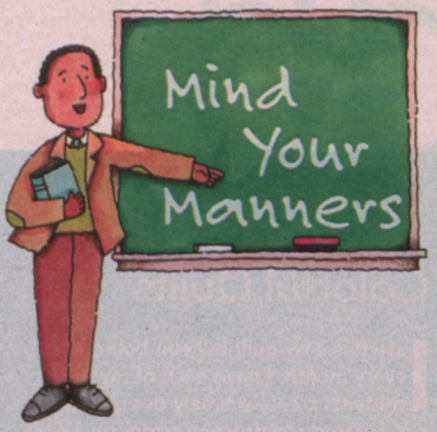
Smith isn't alone in being apprehensive. At the end of this school year, the coaches will return to their own classrooms. To keep the program going, some will keep their doors open to any teacher who wants to come in, observe, and learn. Teachers who've been trained by the coaches add that the book clubs, study groups, and online forums created over the past few years will continue to offer venues in which to share lesson plans, research, and strategies. Shelton believes this signals a sea change in how teachers view professional development.

"Teachers now recognize that [it] is part of their responsibility," she says. "We as professionals need to keep growing and challenging ourselves and not be afraid to try new things."

—TIM WALKER

PHOTO: TIM STRICKLAND

Is teaching manners a good use of classroom time?



YES When children aren't taught manners at home, I believe the responsibility falls to the school. Teaching students how to respond when greeted, to say please and thank you, and to make eye contact are skills that last a lifetime. In recent years, mounting expectations, additional responsibilities, and dwindling resources have made teaching more stressful. How can we find time to teach manners and courtesy? I incorporate them into my student behavior expectations. I teach the importance of good manners and courtesy the first day and model positive behaviors all year. I teach "please" and "thank you" when I pass out pretzels or cereal for snack time. Students have two choices when I offer a snack: they can say "thank you" or "no thank you." Mouths drop when I take the snack back because a student forgot to say "thank you." I model courtesy through my interactions with students, colleagues, and parents. We practice how to make eye contact and discuss ways to respond when greeted.

I was surprised that many students have never been taught what to do when someone says "good morning." When I talk with a student or another adult, my students have learned that they must wait until our conversation has finished before I will talk to them. Is teaching manners and courtesy a good use of classroom time? Do you prefer adults who are polite or rude?

KIRK HOLLINBECK teaches fourth grade at Procter Elementary in Independence, Missouri.

NO School is a social experience, and teachers will always spend some time each day dealing with manners. However, with so many academic subjects to thoroughly introduce, discuss, and lock in (especially with testing requirements), it should not be the teacher's responsibility to teach basic manners as part of the formal curriculum. Manners should be taught at home from the time a parent begins the dialogue while feeding and diapering the baby!

Before a child enters school, caretakers, parents, or relatives need to define traditional boundaries and reward courteous interactions with others. Before starting school, children must learn patience, to consider others' space and feelings, how to communicate their needs politely, and to treat each other with kindness. If parents have done their job, teachers only need to reinforce manners in the classroom and on the playground. Most children will accept the rules at school because they have already heard them at home, and having sets of rules makes children feel safe.

Further, because children pick up somewhat different cues for manners in each unique culture, families are the best teachers of manners. When children begin school, they then have a basis for observing their classmates and teachers and adapting to appropriate classroom manners.

CAROLYN COWGILL is a retired teacher from the Central Bucks School District in Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

OTHER VOICES

Here's what other educators are saying on our message boards. Join the debate by visiting www.nea.org/debate.

IF TEACHERS WORK with young people and encourage good manners, then when the latter become adults they will hopefully behave in a more courteous and mannerly fashion.
MARJORIE RIOS, Upperman High School, Baxter, Tennessee

WITH OUR CLASSROOMS becoming more diverse, students are not exposed to good manners or the same manners as we are....However, this doesn't mean that the students from different backgrounds or family structures should be held to different standards; it should just be understood that we need to be more alert in correcting their inappropriate behaviors and spend a second to jog their memory of what the correct behavior is. We should not be using time to focus on manners in a math or social studies class, but we should be aware that students may not have the same manners as [we do].
KRISHNA RAMJATTAN, education graduate student, Valparaiso, Indiana

BECAUSE MANNERS and courtesy are essential building blocks of socialization skills, it is imperative that we as educators devote classroom time to teaching them.
DOUG WIELAND, Buchanan Street Elementary School, Los Angeles, California

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Join an upcoming debate and see your name in print! **Should parents have a say in picking their child's teacher? Should we abolish homework?** We'll choose from among the discussion board responses to these questions for a future issue of *NEA Today*. Visit www.nea.org/debate.

ILLUSTRATION: PHOTODISC

BEST BOARDS
Colorful Quilts

I use this easy quilt bulletin board idea every month. I have each of my students create a timely design with cut, colored construction paper on 12-by-18-inch rectangles (turkeys for November, holiday symbols for December, snowmen for January, etc.). I add an appropriate caption, and the bulletin board is done for the month. It's always colorful, inspiring, and prompts lots of compliments!

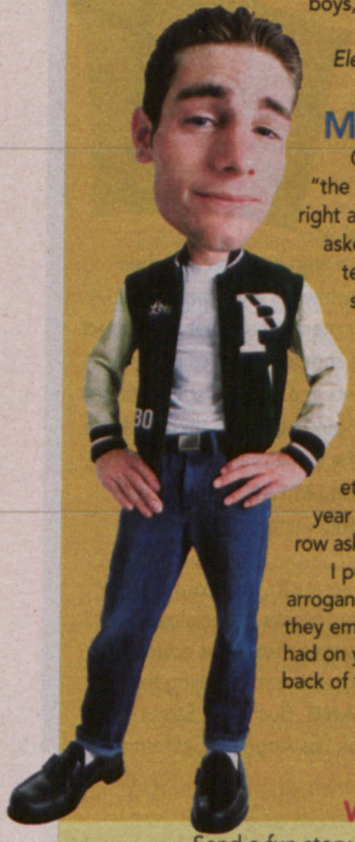
JERROLL SHIRES
Third-grade teacher
Gladstone, Oregon

CHUCKLES

THE EARLY YEARS

While reading some of my students' autobiographies, I came across the following anecdotes: "I met Sidney in kidney garten. Once I became a flower girl for a weeding. My pets are boys, D.O.G., Dreyfus, and Scooby Doo."

PAULETTE OCULAM *Sky Blue Mesa Elementary, Canyon Country, California*



MAMA KNOWS BEST

Our textbook described "conscience" as "the inner voice of reason telling you what is right and wrong." When the test question asked, "What is the inner voice of reason telling you what is right and wrong?" one student promptly wrote, "My mother."

MARY ANN MCGINLEY
third-grade teacher, Wilmette, Illinois

KEEPIN' IT REAL

I was wearing my college letterman's jacket embroidered with the school name and year I graduated ('80). A student in the front row asked, "What's the '80 for?"

I puffed out my chest and said with feigned arrogance, "Well, you see, when you're in college, they embroider the number of girlfriends you had on your jacket." A voice piped up from the back of the room, "So, what's the eight for?"

FRANK KOVAC *High school teacher, South Lake Tahoe, California*

WHAT MAKES YOU SMILE?

Send a fun story to Sabrina Holcomb, **sholcomb@nea.org**.

Holiday Tips

Thank You Acrostics

Just prior to Thanksgiving, I do "Thank You Acrostics" in my classroom. I teach German, so we use the word *danke*, but any language would work just fine. The kids write the word down the left side of a regular piece of paper and think of things for which they are thankful that start with those letters. Students sometimes need a reminder to think deeper than their Nintendo, but the results are usually very thoughtful. To extend the activity, I ask them to draw small pictures of the things they are listing next to the word. They glue their finished creations onto construction paper. The activity makes good fridge art for home and conversation for Thanksgiving dinner.

JENNIFER CRANDALL
Elementary German teacher
Excelsior, Minnesota

Naming Canes

As the holidays approach, I purchase a box of gourmet candy canes for my class, mix them up, and give one to each student. After a brief taste test, the students write a descriptive paragraph describing the flavor and create a new name for the candy cane. For example, last year they dubbed cinnamon "Santa's Hat." They finish their candy canes as they write their "ad copy," and I play holiday music in the background.

DEBORAH CARSWELL
Middle school teacher
Apopka, Florida

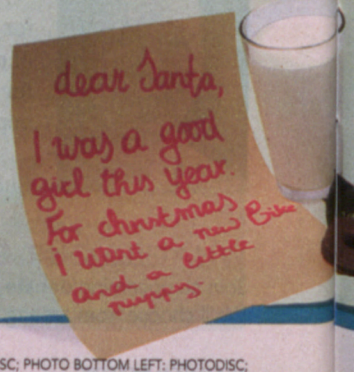
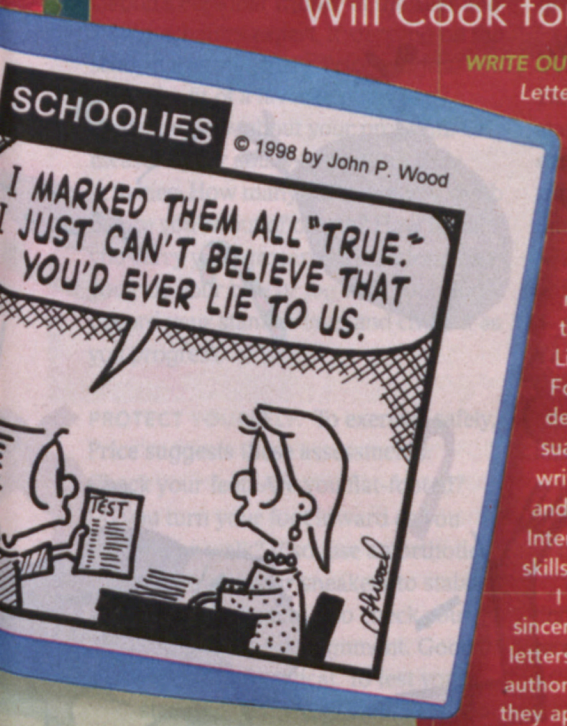


PHOTO TOP: JEROLL SHIRES; TEETH PHOTO: PHOTODISC; PHOTO BOTTOM LEFT: PHOTODISC; PHOTO MIDDLE: DAVID BUFFINGTON; PHOTO BOTTOM RIGHT: STOCKDISC

COOL IDEA
Will Cook for Letters



WRITE OUT OF THE OVEN! *Letters and Recipes from Children's Authors* was cooked up as a class project to help my middle-school students raise funds for the Children's Literacy Foundation, develop persuasive letter-writing skills, and hone effective Internet research skills.

I had students write sincere, thoughtful letters to their favorite authors telling them what they appreciated about their books (some even gave literary "critiques") and asking the authors to share their favorite recipes.

Before drafting the letters, we researched interesting and unusual information about the authors using the Internet, reference books, and resources provided by our school librarian. The students decorated their letters with symbolic art reflecting book themes, plots, characters, etc. We stuffed the letters in colorful envelopes, sent them off, and to the kids' surprise, funny letters and delicious recipes from authors such as Judy Blume and E.L. Konigsburg began to arrive! While I searched for a book publisher, our public library displayed our growing collection of letters and recipes.

The project took four years from start to finish, but *Write Out of the Oven!* was eventually published by Teacher Ideas Press. My students didn't believe it was going to happen, but I told them, "Don't give up! The moment you accept you can do anything you want is the moment you start fulfilling your ability to achieve."

JOSEPHINE WALTZ
Reading teacher,
Bernards Township, New Jersey

INTERESTED IN COOKING UP A SIMILAR PROJECT?
Check out a lesson plan from Josephine Waltz at **www.neatoday.org**.

Letters to Santa

My project brings together high school students and first-graders. For the past three years, the first-grade teachers have taken their students to the computer lab to type letters to Santa. My high school students volunteer a few hours to help the teachers in the lab make sure all students spell words correctly and get their letters saved, with minimal time waiting for help. My advanced computer class retrieves the letters and types responses from Santa to the little ones. In a small town it works well, since the older students usually know a little about the kids and can personalize the message, mentioning a brother or sister or details like the color of the child's house. The high school students have as much fun writing back as the elementary students do receiving the letters!

JULIE WOLETZ
High school business teacher
Cambridge, Wisconsin

Okay, okay! I believe you! Take back the bookbag!

Share your wisdom, ask your question!

What's your most effective method for boosting a student's self-confidence?

Send your answers to these or other questions on this page to **sholcomb@nea.org**. Or, send us a question you'd like to see posted. Please include your name, your job, and the community and state where you work.

For a weekly e-mail of questions, answers, and practical classroom tips, join Works4Me, one of NEA's most popular and useful services. Just send the message "subscribe Works4Me" (without the quotation marks) to **Lyris@list.nea.org**.

CARTOON TOP LEFT: JOHN P. WOOD; ILLUSTRATION TOP RIGHT: GLOWIMAGES; SNOWFLAKE ILLUSTRATION: IGOR KOPELNITSKY; CARTOON BOTTOM: ALEJANDRO YEGROS

Beating the Holiday Bulge

Pick up some weights before you pile on the gravy, and you won't have to give up your favorite seasonal treats.

BY SHEREE CRUTE

The temperature's dropping, the leaves are turning, and you're about to face another season of creeping holiday pudge. It starts out slow, but after a few months of nibbles—Halloween candy, Thanksgiving stuffing, classroom party treats, and all those delicious holiday desserts—most folks pile on 7 to 10 pounds.

But there's a way to ward off the "holiday 10" before the feasts hit, and that's by shoring up your body's fat-fighting defenses now. A toned body burns calories at a much higher rate than a flabby one. Another bonus is that getting in shape will give you extra energy for juggling holiday obligations. And you can do it without spending a fortune on a fancy gym or personal trainer.

One of the best-kept fitness secrets is that with a little planning and effort, you can get fit all by yourself. We've asked three top trainers to teach you the basics and suggest the best resources for creating a practical, effective fitness plan you can easily follow, change when you get bored, and stick with for life.

Find Your Motivation

To begin, tackle the single issue that contributes to the failure of most fitness plans—motivation. The idea, experts say, is to concentrate on issues other than diet, exercise, or even health. "What's your driving force? What do you want to achieve in life?" asks Gillian Hood-Gabrielson, a fitness coach and motivation expert who says that studies show people can't be "scared fit." Instead, it's looking forward to living better that keeps people moving.

Hood-Gabrielson's approach is exactly what keeps Bronx, New York, dance teacher and NEA member Beverly Spencer fit and on her feet, even when the demands of the classroom wear her down. "Dance is my motivating factor," says Spencer, who once performed with the Dance Theatre of Harlem's Workshop Ensemble. "It's a creative art form, and anything I can do that's creative is very important to me."

Spencer stays active teaching West African dance to K–4 students at Community School 66 in the Bronx. She's also found a new fun way to stay fit by adding belly dancing to her workouts. Rather than just seeing it as a great way to burn calories—which it is—Spencer considers it "a reward, because I'm learning a new form of dance."

Four Steps to Fitness

To create a self-guided plan that fuels your passions and makes your holidays healthier, try these four steps.

GET IN TOUCH WITH REALITY. Buy a journal. Record goals, motivating factors, starting measurements, and eating plans, and then chart your progress—all what a good trainer would do for you. Next, "set measurable, achievable goals," advises Hood-Gabrielson, who's also founder of healthieroutcomes.com and an expert on intuitive eating. "Don't start with, 'I'm going to lose 40 pounds.' Begin with doable, weekly goals." Avoiding the stress of unrealistic expectations is one of the keys to a successful plan. Losing two pounds a week is both healthy and realistic.

LEARN YOUR BODY'S BASICS. Weigh and measure yourself, suggests Justin Price, the IDEA Health and Fitness Association's Personal Trainer of the Year and a biomechanics expert. If stepping on the scale makes you crazy, Price suggests using the fit of a favorite outfit as a guideline throughout your program. Or measure your ability to perform daily activities: How many stairs can you climb before you're out of breath? How far can you carry your groceries? How long can you ride your bike or jog with your dog? Record your stamina level and check it as you progress.

PROTECT YOURSELF. To exercise safely, Price suggests these assessments: Check your feet. Are you flat-footed? Do you turn your foot inward as you stand or walk? If so, use an orthotic device in your sneakers to stabilize your gait. Also check your hip and back alignment. Good posture is critical. To test yours, stand against a wall and place your heels, buttocks, head, and shoulders against it. Then place your open hands on each pelvic bone, with your fingertips facing in toward each other. Bring your fingers together until your index and middle finger touch. Look down and rotate your pelvis up, pulling in your stomach, until you can see your middle finger. That stance should be your proper posture.

DESIGN YOUR PLAN. Everyone needs cardiovascular conditioning, toning, and resistance training, and there are tons of ways to accomplish that goal, Price stresses. In addition to the plans listed below, try out a range of exercise videos and add them to your routine for variety, or check out the cable network fitness shows. You can also log onto the Web to find exercises and learn how to move properly. The President's Council on Physical Fitness (www.fitness.gov/pepup.htm) is free, while Plus One Active (www.plusoneactive.com), which includes a library of 800 moves, costs $10.

ONE IMPORTANT THING. If you haven't been working out regularly, check with your doctor before starting any program, no matter how gentle.

Work Your Plan

Here are a few basic exercises to get you started. Add or subtract new activities every six months or so, after your body gets used to certain moves. Each workout should include:

- a 5- to 10-minute **WARMUP**
- five minutes of **STRETCHING**
- at least 30 minutes of **CARDIOVASCULAR** training three times a week to start (work up to five days and 45 minutes, or an hour if you want to lose lots of weight)
- upper and lower body **RESISTANCE** training at least three times a week, and
- three to five minutes **COOL DOWN**.

Feel like you're losing your motivation? Crack open your journal and reread your goals.

BEGINNER. Just walk. "Sedentary people take about 4,500 steps a day," says Sheri Colberg-Ochs, a professor and an expert in exercise physiology. "Buy a pedometer, record your steps, and try to add 2,000 steps—that's about a mile, or a few times around your typical school hallway." For resistance training, "you can use water bottles or full soup cans," Colberg-Ochs explains. Just make sure they're equal in weight. Visit the President's Council site for basic upper body moves.

INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED. Work the stairs. "Walk up one flight, stop, hold onto a handrail for balance, and do 10 squats. Go back down the flight, hold the rail and do 10 lunges on each leg," advises personal trainer Neal Pire, a Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine and advisor to Plus One Active. Start out with five flights, progress to 10 after two weeks, and so on. For advanced work, increase the number of repetitions.

For resistance training, wrap an intermediate-level resistance band around a stationary object. Hold one end of the resistance band in your left hand and one in your right hand, then back up until the bands are flexing your muscles. Now bring both your hands to one side of your waist and make a circular motion as if you're paddling a canoe. Do 10 reps on each side; work up to 15. For more advanced work, buy advanced-level bands to increase the level of resistance.

Keep It Flexible

If you don't like exercise equipment or just want a change of pace, take your workout outside or try a fun new activity. Bike, hike, or take a dancing class and learn to samba—just make sure you increase your endurance and frequency over time, Pire says. No matter what approach you choose, "there's no such thing as failure," Price says. "Increasing your level of movement will enhance every aspect of your life." Not to mention letting you sip your eggnog and nosh on those cookies with confidence. nea

The Nose Has It *NEA Member Tip*

Stress can make it impossible to stick with any healthy living plan. Yet it's a way of life for most teachers, says dance teacher Beverly Spencer. Spencer's answer to those days when a pint of ice cream and a slab of poundcake seem like the only solution to classroom-related stress is aromatherapy. Here are her two favorite recipes for calming the nerves and heading off stress-related munching.

LAVENDER OIL. Place one drop in the palm of one hand. Rub in three small circles, and then rub your hands together. Cup your hands over the nose and mouth and inhale and exhale deeply, at least three times.

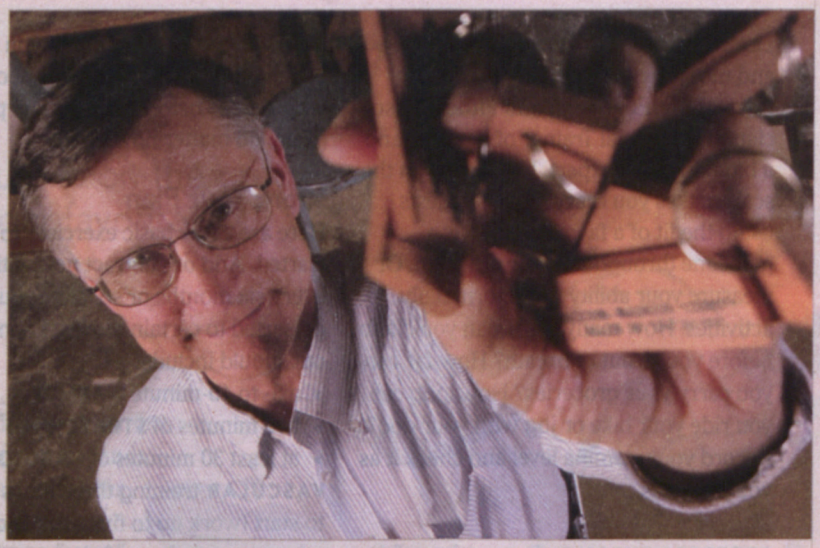
MIXED BLENDS. Blend one or two drops each of tangerine, orange, ylang-ylang, patchouli, and blue tansy oils in your palm, the follow the same breathing procedure.

Aromatherapy oils can be found at most health food stores. "Always be sure to use therapeutic grade essential oils with no additives," Spencer says.

ILLUSTRATION: JIM DANDY

Unwinding With Wood

A Tennessee support professional sticks it to stress with a unique gift.



SUPERSTITIOUS? KNOCK ON WOOD. Stressed? Rub some wood.

That's the theory behind Stress Sticks, created by John Brazee, a carpenter and warehouse supervisor for Tennessee's Jackson-Madison County school system. He carves each of the pocket-size wooden rectangles himself and gives them out for folks to tote in a wallet or handbag. "Keep stress in pocket or purse—not in heart," read the accompanying instructions.

Brazee conceived the idea five years ago while working among the large stacks of wood in his warehouse. "The original idea was floating around from living stones and other little things you carry around with you," he says. "So I made mine a Stress Stick."

When he unveiled them at a college job fair, offering them to undergrads who came to hear him talk about carpentry, the sticks were a hit. So much so that Brazee started attaching his business card and giving them to the salespeople with whom he did business. Soon, he was handing them out at Tennessee Education Association meetings, ESP National Committee conferences, and the NEA Representative Assembly. At one RA, NEA Vice President Dennis Van Roekel got his first Stress Stick.

"I give them away to anybody I can get my hands on," Brazee says, estimating that about 2,000 have passed from his hands to others'. And that's a lot of stress relief.

PEOPLE POLL

What's the one item you would put inside a time capsule that best captures your essence?

Photo album — 66%, Three beloved books and my mix CDs — 19%, Stack of e-mails to and from family and friends — 7%, A recent credit card bill — 5%, Favorite pair of jeans or baseball cap — 3%

Head to www.neatoday.org to vote in January's poll:

When you look back on 2007, what's the one thing you most want to be able to say about your year?

Command Performance

Collecting histories that might otherwise get lost keeps this teacher on his toes.

CHARLES JEROME WOODS, a special education teacher in Los Angeles, has a passion for dance and perhaps an even larger passion for preserving it. From dancing in the kitchen as a young man and mulling a career as a dancer or critic, he's come to view the development of a National Black Dance Archive as his top priority outside of the classroom.

Dancers are dying or leaving the region, Woods says, and their playbills, flyers, and ephemera are getting lost or discarded. He has nearly 1,000 pieces now, but is grappling with where to house it all.

This isn't Woods' only foray into complex archival work. He is also amassing documents that will comprise the Western States Black, Lesbian, Gay, and Transgender Archive.

Woods says he's not a spokesperson for the cultural communities he creates archives for, "but I want them to be preserved. And not just preserved, but seen, heard, and enjoyed."

PHOTO TOP: ANDREW MCMURTRIE; BOTTOM: SUSAN GOLDMAN

Going to the Dogs

A Montana retiree chases her new passion across frozen expanses—and back into the classroom.

WHEN LELA SCHLITZ RETIRED from teaching elementary school in 2002, she knew she'd need something to keep her busy, so she went barking up another tree.

Her husband had started a five-dog touring sled team with $5,000 of their savings. She began joining him on weekends, taking the dogs to a nearby ski resort and giving people rides for cash. The couple "slogged through the snow on a sled in winter and a golf cart in summer," says Schlitz. "It was exhausting. As mushers, we push more than we ride."

It wasn't long before education returned to Schlitz's life, this time as part of her new business enterprise. While giving a fellow teacher a ride one day, the woman mentioned that her class was reading a book about a boy trying to save his grandfather's farm by winning a sled race. She asked Schlitz to bring the team to her school. "That's when we realized we could tie this in with literature," Schlitz says. "We use *Stone Fox* in the elementary classes and *Call of the Wild* among high schoolers." In addition to the reading programs, she and her husband conduct school assemblies, giving children the chance to pet the dogs and learn about their work on a team. They relax on their 20-acre spread in Montana.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I think that I would have mushed a dog sled," she says. "But I found something that I can put my heart and soul into."

A Hobby That's (Not) Music to His Ears

One Minnesota choral and drama teacher has spent the last 20 years in stitches.

MIKE ELLINGSEN KNOWS that as in the music and drama lessons he imparts to his students, artistry is in perfecting the details. For 20 years, Ellingsen has melded countless fabric swatches and delicate thread into more than 90 heirloom quilts.

It was watching his wife work on a sewing machine that first drew his interest. "I thought, 'It's just another power tool so it looks fun,'" he recalls. When the couple saw a quilt on a magazine cover that they liked, they considered its expense and decided to take a crack at making one themselves. Ellingsen has primarily taught himself, using books and watching instructional TV shows. While he's certainly not the only male quilter out there, he says men practicing the art are "a pretty rare breed, maybe one in 100."

His work has garnered the attention of not only the myriad recipients of his creations, but also the area quilting community. This year, he was the featured quilter at a quilting exposition in his hometown of Blue Earth, and he designed a special blanket for the event, featuring 150-year-old pictures from the town's history.

The tranquility of the hobby appeals most to the man whose day is filled with a medley of sounds, sometimes cacophonous.

"I spend my whole day using my voice, but quilting is silent," Ellingsen says.

GOT A TIP?

Do you have an interesting story tip? Contact Cynthia Kopkowski at **ckopkowski@nea.org**.

PHOTO TOP: KYLE BREHM; BOTTOM: JOHN CROSS

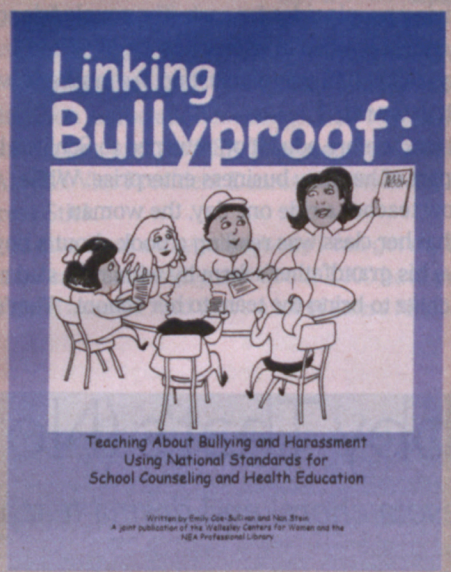
The NEA Professional Library...

THE Bookstore for Educators

NEW from the NEA Professional Library!

It's never too early to teach respect ...

Now you can link your lessons on bullying to national school counseling and health education standards! As a supplement to the highly successful original ***Bullyproof*** guide, ***Linking Bullyproof*** integrates the topics of bullying and harassment with 4th and 5th grade classroom curriculum.



60 pp.
Item #1885-0-00-D
NEA Members $12.95
Nonmembers $14.95
Shipping charges will be added to each order

Now from the NEA Professional Library

www.nea.org/books 1.800.229.4200

NEA Professional Library—THE Bookstore for Educators

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org

Great Public Schools for Every Child

resources

53 **Grants & Awards** Finally—something interesting to do with Bubble Wrap.
54 **Take Note** National Inclusive Schools Week is December 4–8.
55 **On TV** If you can't get to Yellowstone for Christmas, watch this PBS special.
57 **In Print** A primer on Pilgrims that educates and entertains.
59 **NEA's Read Across America** Apply for a Youth Leadership for Literacy Grant.
59 **Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits** Did you know that the NEA Magazine Service offers over 800 titles at substantial savings?
61 **On the Web** Download free lesson plans from the History Channel.
61 **Books by NEA Members** Bridge the school-family relationship gap with Family Night—dozens of creative ideas show you how.
62 **Diversity Calendar** American Indian Heritage Month, and a recipe for corn pudding.

Apply Now for NEA Foundation Grants

DEADLINES APPROACHING FOR THE NEA FOUNDATION'S DECEMBER AND FEBRUARY GRANT REVIEW. On behalf of NEA, the NEA Foundation offers **NEA FINE ARTS GRANTS.** Available this year to secondary (grades 6–12) school art specialists through local NEA affiliates, the grants allow educators to create and implement fine art programs that promote learning among students at risk of school failure.

THE NEA FOUNDATION
www.neafoundation.org

The grant amount is $2,000. At least 10 grants will be awarded. Grant funds may be used for resource materials, supplies, equipment, transportation, software, and/or professional fees. Funds may not be used to pay indirect costs, grant administration fees, or salaries, or for lobbying or religious purposes. A majority of the funds may not be used to engage an artist-in-residence.

Applications are due by **December 15, 2006**. The NEA Foundation will notify successful applicants by mail no later than June 30, 2007. For more information on eligibility, visit **www.neafoundation.org/programs/finearts.htm**.

February 1, 2007, is the next submission deadline for both the *Student Achievement Grants* (formerly Innovation Grants) and the *Learning & Leadership Grants*. Recipients will be notified by June 15, 2007. Grants fund activities for 12 months from the award date.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GRANTS provide $5,000 to improve the academic achievement of students by engaging in critical thinking and problem-solving that deepen knowledge of standards-based subject matter.

LEARNING & LEADERSHIP GRANTS provide opportunities for teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty and staff to engage in high-quality professional development and lead their colleagues in professional growth. The grant amount is $2,000 for individuals and $5,000 for groups engaged in collegial study.

Visit **www.neafoundation.org** today for more information, including guidelines and applications. Or call **(202) 822-7840**.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY DECEMBER 14, 2006, FOR *NEA'S BOOKS ACROSS AMERICA LIBRARY BOOKS AWARDS*. Made in collaboration with NEA, these awards provide $5,000 to public schools serving economically disadvantaged students to purchase books for school libraries. The 2007 *NEA's Books Across America Library Books Awards* are made possible with support from individuals who donated to NEA's Books Across America fund, which brings the gift of reading to students affected by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. Only award recipients will be notified in writing. A list of award recipients will be posted on the NEA Foundation's Web site by March 5, 2007.

For information, visit **www.neafoundation.org/programs/BooksAcrossAmericaAwards.htm**.

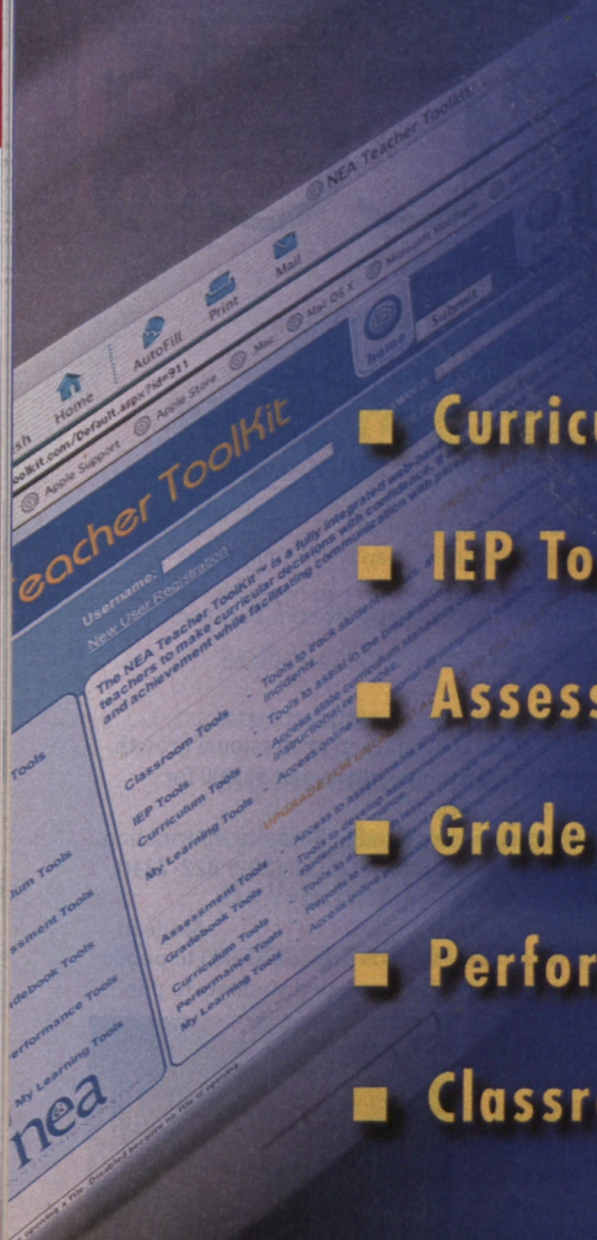
TOMORROW'S TEACHERS—TODAY'S MEMBERS

Building a strong presence on campus is one of the biggest challenges that NEA Student Program chapters face. The NEA Student Program provides financial assistance in the form of SOAR (Student Organizing and Assistance Resources) grants to support efforts to recruit new members or organize a chapter. Chapters may apply for funding to recruit members in urban institutions, schools with minority populations and historically minority campuses, community colleges, and high-

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

NEA Teacher ToolKit™

www.neateachertoolkit.com



- Curriculum Tools
- IEP Tools
- Assessment Tools
- Grade Book Tools
- Performance Tools
- Classroom Tools

Sign Up Today!

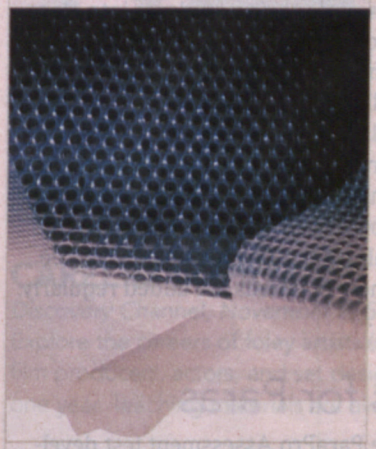
www.neateachertoolkit.com

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org

Great Public Schools for Every Child

school future teacher programs. Applications for second semester efforts are due by January 31, 2007. Go to **www.nea.org/student-program/programs/soar.html** for information and a downloadable application.

IS ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS AMERICA'S NEXT GREAT INVENTOR?



Sealed Air Corporation, the creator of Bubble Wrap cushioning, is sponsoring the first-ever Bubble Wrap Competition for Young Inventors. Students in grades 5–8 can demonstrate their creativity and ingenuity by creating an invention that incorporates Bubble Wrap cushioning.

Ten semi-finalists will each receive a $500 savings bond. Three finalists will win a three-day trip to New York City, along with a parent or guardian, where the grand prize winner will be announced on Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day, January 29, 2007. This winner will receive a $10,000 savings bond, while the second and third place winners will receive $5,000 and $3,000, respectively, in savings bonds. The teacher/mentor of each finalist will receive a $500 gift card. Entries must include an explanation of the invention and accompanying visuals.

Go to **www.nmoe.org/bubblewrap/index.html** to learn more. Applications may be submitted year round.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AWARDS

The Christopher Columbus Awards challenge middle school students to explore opportunities for positive change in their communities. Teams of up to four students and a coach—who may be a teacher, parent, community leader, or mentor—identify a community issue and use the scientific process to solve it. The program attracts many students who might not typically enter a science competition—more than half of the entrants are girls, and more than a quarter are from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Finalist teams win an all-expenses-paid trip to Walt Disney World, where they compete for U.S. Savings Bonds and the $25,000 Columbus Foundation Community Grant to bring their idea to life. This program is sponsored by the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation with support from the National Science Foundation.

For more information, go to **www.christophercolumbusawards.com**. The deadline to apply is February 12, 2007.

GET CREATIVE—IN ITALY

Creativity Workshop Educator Fellowships will be given to two educators attending the Creativity Workshop in Florence, Italy, July 13–22, 2007. Workshop participants learn to break through creative blocks and find new sources of inspiration through creative writing, art, memoir, storytelling, drama, journaling, and map-making exercises. The fellowships will be awarded on the basis of a 500-word proposal: "How to Inspire and Implement Creativity in the Classroom." The concept of creativity can be in any subject area from science to the more traditional creative arts.

The first prize fellowship includes free tuition and nine nights' accommodations in Florence. Airfare is not included. The second prize fellowship includes free tuition to attend a Creativity Workshop in Florence, but does not include airfare or hotel accommodations.

Applicants must be full-time educators at an accredited educational institution. Go to **www.thecreativityseminars.com/educatoraward.html** for full guidelines. The deadline to apply is December 1, 2006.

Teaching Tolerance Grant Funding

Teaching Tolerance offers grant funding — up to $2,500 — to PreK-12 educators for developing and implementing tolerance-based projects that focus on:

- Intergroup activities incorporating cultural competency
- Comprehensive multicultural education
- Character education with an intergroup component
- Innovative anti-bias ideas

Grant guidelines and application >> *www.teachingtolerance.org/neagrants*

SPONSORED BY
TEACHING TOLERANCE
A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

PHOTO TOP RIGHT: STOCKXCHNGE.COM

Take Note

So You Want To Write Children's Books

Here's your chance: Enter "What's the Story?" a contest for teachers who have written an original children's book or poem. Sponsored by SRA/McGraw-Hill, the contest seeks creative, original, and imaginative stories and poems (fiction and nonfiction) written for students in preK–6—anything you think your own students would enjoy. Submit as many entries as you like in either English or Spanish. Story winners will receive a cash prize of $1,000. Winning poets will receive a cash prize of $500. Winners will be published in a preK–6 reading and language arts curriculum. Go to http://stories.sraonline.com/splash.html. Entries must be received by **December 31, 2006**.

National Inclusive Schools Week

The 6th annual National Inclusive Schools Week, **December 4–8**, highlights the progress our nation's schools have made in using inclusive practices to ensure a quality education for an increasingly diverse student population, including students with disabilities, those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and English-language learners. This year's theme is Charting an Inclusive Journey Through School, Work, and Life: Successful Transition Planning for All Students.

The event will highlight resources that educators and families can use to prepare students to manage and embrace change, as well as tools to teach self-advocacy and self-determination skills. Numerous resources, materials, and products are available on the Web site throughout the year to help schools plan for the week and spread the message that inclusive practices benefit all students. Go to www.inclusiveschools.org/default.asp for information, including an organizing kit with free and reproducible materials.

Making Sense of Math Curricula

What are the most important math topics to teach at the elementary, middle, and high school levels?

To bring clarity and coherence to diverse mathematics curricula in use across the United States, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics has released *Curriculum Focal Points for Prekindergarten through Grade 8 Mathematics: A Quest for Coherence*. Developed with the participation of mathematicians, math educators, curriculum developers, and classroom teachers, the *Focal Points* can help drive discussions and analyses about how to organize critical mathematical topics and objectives and provides a framework for states and districts to design more focused curricular expectations and assessments for preK–8 curriculum development. Go to http://nctm.org/focalpoints to read or download for free.

Library of Congress Resources

According to the Department of Education, more than 10 million digitized historical artifacts are available at the Library of Congress' Web site, ranging from ancient manuscripts to Civil War maps, classic blues recordings to Coca-Cola commercials, Dust Bowl photographs to Thomas Edison's first films. These unique primary sources bring students into close personal contact with the people, places, and events of our nation's past. K–12 classroom teachers are provided with tools to bring these collections to life on the Teachers page.

Over 70 original lesson plans provide ways to integrate primary sources into the curriculum. Interactive activities, historical and cultural timelines, and online feature presentations provide accessible introductions to major periods in our nation's growth. The materials on the Teachers page are free, with no login required, and new materials are added regularly. Go to www.loc.gov/teachers.

Refresher Tests for Paras

Many school districts use the ParaPro Assessment test developed by ETS to determine whether paraprofessionals who have not completed two years of college meet requirements to be "highly qualified" under the No Child Left Behind law. In order to help individuals practice for the test, NEA has created three short, interactive online refresher quizzes in math, reading, and writing, based on the kinds of questions asked on the ETS test. The practice tests can also be helpful to any ESP who needs to demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, and math—no matter what the job category. To take the tests, go to www.nea.org/esphome/issues/refresher-test2.html.

Don't Get Sidelined by the Flu

Flu season is approaching. According to the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), children are two to three times more likely to get sick with the flu and spread the virus to others, causing high rates of absenteeism. Because flu outbreaks are a major concern to schools nationwide, NASN has launched a new campaign, "Don't Get Sidelined by the Flu," designed to help school nurses educate parents and students about seasonal influenza.

Go to www.nasn.org/Default.aspx?tabid=316 for information and to download copies of a flu flyer, fact sheet, outbreak advisory, an advisory for special-needs students, and a template newsletter article. Materials are in English and Spanish.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM TOP LEFT: SCHOOL-CLIP-ART.COM, GETTY IMAGES

On TV

INDIAN COUNTRY DIARIES

PBS, November. Check local listings for dates/times.
In conjunction with American Indian Heritage Month, PBS airs two "diaries" as a "State of the Union" for modern American Indian cultures. *A Seat at the Drum* follows a journalist from the Bad River Ojibwe tribe as he searches for a sense of community in Los Angeles. *Spiral of Fire* documents the journey of a Choctaw author as she visits the Eastern Band of Cherokees in North Carolina. A study guide can be found at www.indiancountrydiaries.org.

CAREERS IN FILM

Discovery Channel, November 9, 5 a.m. ET/PT.
Explore the careers of foley artists (sound effects wizards), wildlife filmmakers, animators, film producers, actors, and set designers. Can be taped and used in the classroom for one year. Teaching materials are available at www.discoveryschool.com.

A TOUCH OF GREATNESS

PBS, November 14, 10 p.m., ET/PT. Check local listings.
From Independent Lens, this Emmy-nominated documentary follows maverick public school teacher Albert Cullum as he rejects Dick and Jane and teaches Shakespeare and Sophocles to his fifth-grade classroom in New York. For more, go to www.pbs.org/independentlens/touchofgreatness.

CHRISTMAS IN YELLOWSTONE

PBS, November 19 & December 24, 8 p.m. ET. Check local listings.
This holiday postcard from *Nature* depicts Christmas in no ordinary place. Winter transforms Yellowstone, with its unique combination of hot springs, cold temperatures, and wild animals. Ice crystals create an otherworldly curtain to view the animals as they forage for food.

CONQUEST OF AMERICA

History Channel, November 20–23, 6 a.m. ET/PT.
This series follows the exploration of North America through the men who undertook the journeys. Episodes include a look at Coronado's 1540 expedition; the New World fight between Spain and France over Florida; Henry Hudson's search for a northern sea route to the East Indies; and Vitus Bering's expedition to determine whether Asia and America were connected. Tape and use in the classroom for two years. Teaching materials are at www.history.com/classroom/guides.

IN THE WOMB: ANIMALS

National Geographic Channel, December 10, 8 p.m. ET/7 p.m. PT.
Appropriate for mature students and their families, this fascinating show follows the path from conception to birth in three mammals—an elephant, dolphin, and dog. Beginning with candid shots of mating, the narrative cuts to computer graphics depicting a sperm's 12-hour trip to the egg. Later, 4-D ultrasound pictures show the development of each animal as it moves and grows within the womb.

On TV listings are provided by KIDSNET, a national resource for children's media in Washington, D.C., www.kidsnet.org, and by Cable in the Classroom's Access Learning *magazine at www.ciconline.org.*

Enhance your career with Cal U's 100% online programs

California University of Pennsylvania's online programs were created for you...the busy working professional looking to advance your career, but unable to fit traditional classroom study into your schedule.

Master of Arts Teaching Program helps you expand your teaching skills. It correlates with the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and provides information about national certification.

The Administrative Program for Principals provides a personalized approach whether you are seeking principal's certification, a master's degree, or want to enhance your teaching and leadership skills.

The Superintendent Letter of Eligibility Program can be completed in seven semesters at times that are convenient for you.

For more information,
call 866-595-6348,
e-mail calugo@cup.edu
or visit **www.cup.edu/go.**

California University of Pennsylvania is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

CALU
GLOBAL ONLINE
California University of Pennsylvania
Building Character. Building Careers.
A proud member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education

PHOTOS FROM TOP: NATIVE AMERICAN PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TOM MURPHY, LONE WOLF PICTURES

In Print

A SAD CHAPTER IN HISTORY

In 1837, white fur traders brought smallpox to the upper Missouri region, launching an epidemic that would kill more than 90 percent of the Mandan Indians living in the area. Author Michael Spooner revisits this disaster in his powerful and fictionalized ***Last Child***. Rosalie, a young girl with a White father and Mandan mother, struggles to grow up and become her own person, torn between the two worlds she inhabits and forced to witness the terrible tragedy unfolding around her. Grades 6–9. 240 pp. $16.95 from Henry Holt. Go to www.henryholtchildrensbooks.com to order.

SOLDIERS BEHIND THE LENS

This is Our War: A Soldier's Portfolio: Servicemen's Photographs of Life in Iraq by David Friedman and the editors of GQ, is a photographic collage of United States servicemen and women living out their tours of duty in Iraq. Taken by the troops themselves, 250 photographs portray the spectrum of military experience, from the mundane to the horrifying, from napping in Saddam's former palace to helping citizens search mass graves for loved ones. Take note: Some photos are explicit and may not be appropriate for students. 224 pp. $29.95 from Artisan. To order, go to www.artisanbooks.com.

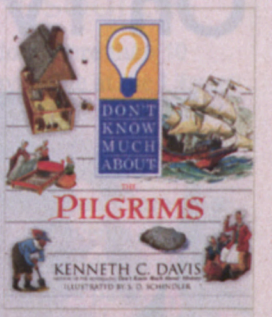
WALKING ON WATER TO SAFETY

Tim Tingle's ***Crossing Bok Chitto: A Choctaw Tale of Friendship and Freedom*** links the lives of Martha, a young Choctaw girl who lives on one side of a river in Mississippi, and a slave boy who lives on a plantation on the opposite bank. Martha knows a secret that can help Little Moses and his family escape, but there is danger. Can they cross to safety before his mother is sold? Ages 4–8. 40 pp. $17.95 from Cinco Puntos Press. Go to www.cincopuntos.com to order.

A PUMPKIN'S LIFE

A photographic ode to an autumn icon, ***Pumpkins***, by Ken Robbins, traces a pumpkin's life from seedling to flower to jack-o'-lantern and, finally, to grist in the field for next year's crop. Simple text is accompanied by luscious photos that elevate the prosaic pumpkin to the level of art. Instructions are included for making a jack-o'-lantern. Ages 4–8. 32 pp. $14.95 from Roaring Book Press. To order, call (646) 307-5151.

AND YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW THE PILGRIMS



Did the Pilgrims really call themselves "Pilgrims?" Did they actually step on Plymouth Rock? Did they celebrate Christmas? Answers—and entertainment—are found in Kenneth Davis' ***Don't Know Much About: The Pilgrims***. Part of a best-selling series, this book is bursting with information about games Pilgrims played, food they cooked, clothes they wore, and nearly anything else you ever wondered about Pilgrim life. Wonderful illustrations bring the subject humorously to life. Ages 6–9. 47 pp. $6.99 from HarperCollins. Go to www.harperchildrens.com.

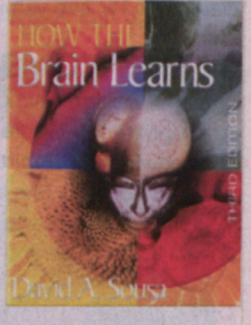
INDIAN TALES FOR TODAY

Edited by Lori Marie Carlson, ***Moccasin Thunder: American Indian Stories for Today*** offers a fresh look at what it's like to be young and American Indian. The collection of stories from authors such as Sherman Alexie and Louise Erdrich dispels stereotypes and honestly addresses both the problems and cultural pride of the Native American people, dealing with alcoholism, reservation life, Indian schools, and the indomitable Native American spirit. Ages 12 and up. 156 pp. $15.99 from HarperCollins. To order, go to www.harperchildrens.com.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Respect is every girl's birthright, maintain Courtney Macavinta and Andrea Vander Pluym, authors of ***Respect: A Girl's Guide to Getting Respect and Dealing When Your Line is Crossed***. Covering issues teen girls face daily—body image, family, the media, sex, relationships, and rumors, to name a few—this book provides practical advice and strategies for how to respect yourself and get respect from others. Journaling exercises, quotes from teen girls, true stories, and facts keep the advice real in this straight-talking guide. 240 pp. $15.95 from Free Spirit Publishing. Go to www.freespirit.com to order.

NEUROSCIENCE IN THE CLASSROOM



How can you teach so that students learn and remember? Bringing together the latest research in brain anatomy, psychology, and educational theory, the third edition of bestseller ***How the Brain Learns*** by David Sousa demonstrates how to translate new research into effective classroom strategies and activities. This is an excellent tool for educators, administrators, parents, and anyone who has an interest in how young people absorb and retain knowledge. 309 pp. $39.95 from Corwin Press. Go to www.corwinpress.com.

EDUCATION MARKET

TEACHERS DESERVE A CARROT. 3.9% APR ON ALL PRE-LOVED VW'S

How do we know our Certified Pre-Loved Volkswagens were loved? We put each of them through a 112-point inspection then add a manufacturer-backed 2-year/24,000 mi. limited warranty. Come take a Joyride today and feel the love.

Certified **Pre-Loved Volkswagens**

EARN YOUR M.S. OR ED.S. DEGREE FROM HOME IN ABOUT 14 MONTHS

Brainsmart.com

Strengthen student learning and enhance your career with an accredited degree earned 100% through distance learning. Join hundreds of educators from 30 states and learn practical brain-based strategies for increasing student achievement shared with packed audiences at national conferences including NBPTS, NAESP, ASCD, and regional NEA and IRA events. APPLY by Nov.24. Start in Jan. Call 1-866-SMART61,

nsu@brainsmart.com, www.brainsmart.com

A CD of Holiday Classics

Supporting the NEA HIN Disaster Relief Fund

Here come the holidays and the perfect gift for family and friends. Hey Man, Merry Christmas is a full-length CD of holiday standards from vocalist, Signorello, and his world-class big band. NEA members receive a $1 discount per CD plus $1 will be donated to the NEA HIN Disaster Relief Fund for each CD purchased.

Go to fye.com/John to listen, and enter promo code NEAJOHN at check-out.

ICON fye

One Survivor Remembers

A Holocaust Teaching Kit for Grades 8-12

This powerful teaching kit includes:

- Oscar-winning film
- Primary documents, including personal photos
- Teacher's guide with standards-based lessons
- Resource booklet

Meets content standards in U.S. History, World History and Language Arts

For a FREE copy, visit www.teachingtolerance.org/neakit

Teaching Tolerance Magazine

This award-winning, semiannual magazine profiles successful anti-bias classroom strategies, reports school-wide tolerance initiatives, and reviews the best multicultural resources available. Here you can get great ideas from educators, schools and programs promoting diversity and equity in replicable ways.

Visit www.teachingtolerance.org/neamag for your FREE 2-year subscription today.

LEAD THE E-LEARNING REVOLUTION

NCU NORTHCENTRAL UNIVERSITY "The better way to earn your degree"™

Be a leader in the fast-growing field of online learning with your graduate degree specialization in *E-Learning and Teaching Online.* Regionally accredited and 100% online (no campus residency), NCU offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs for busy professionals. Choose from 13 graduate specializations. **Visit nea.ncu.edu or call 866-776-0331.**

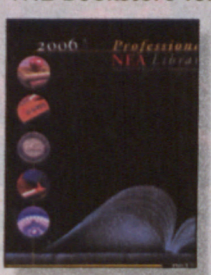
NEA MEMBER BENEFITS

SERVICE • ACCESSIBILITY • PRICE • FEATURES • STABILITY • OUTSTANDING QUALITY nea

Look for the NEA Seal of Excellence on exceptional products and services provided to members through NEA Member Benefits. NEA Member Benefits is pleased to introduce the NEA Seal of Excellence, a mark of distinction earned by outstanding products and services offered only to NEA members and their families. Of the many products reviewed by NEA Member Benefits, only a distinguished few can earn the NEA Seal of Excellence.

NEA PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

***THE* Bookstore for Educators**

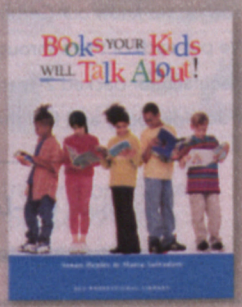


It takes inspiration to keep students motivated and excited to learn. The **NEA Professional Library** has the innovative resources you need to revitalize your classroom. Each title is research-based and designed for application in real classrooms. Whether you're a veteran educator or brand new to the classroom, you'll find materials designed to help you meet the challenges you face every day. To order, call **800-229-4200** or visit us at **www.nea.org/books.**

The NEA Professional Library...

THE Bookstore for Educators

- Research-based
- Practical information and techniques



NEA Professional Library books can help you and your colleagues manage classrooms, inspire students and transform learning.

Whatever your role is in education, the *NEA Professional Library* is a great source for books and other resources that speak directly to the challenges you and your colleagues face in schools and classrooms across the nation.

Visit us online at www.nea.org/books.

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org

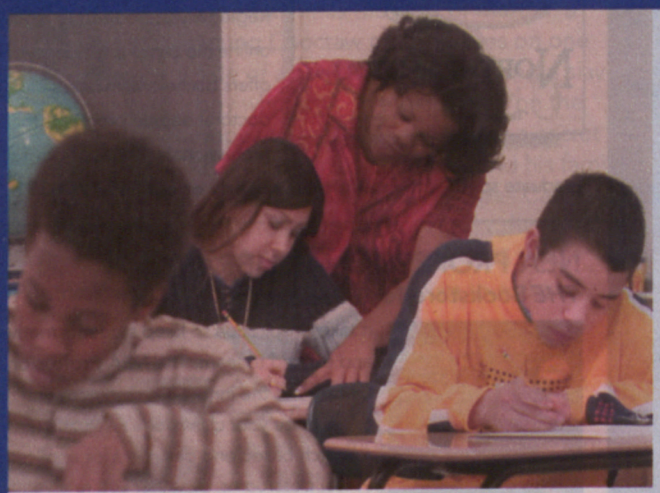
Great Public Schools for Every Child

The tom joyner Foundation

2005-2006 Participating Schools

Clark Atlanta University, GA
Bowie State University, MD
Jackson State University, MS
Harris-Stowe State University, MO
Tennessee State University, TN
Johnson C. Smith University, NC
Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, PA

NEA & The Tom Joyner Foundation



Tom Joyner Foundation & The National Education Association:

Moving Teachers Toward Full Licensure!

The Foundation and the National Education Association believe that pre-K through 12 curriculum should be taught by licensed teachers. We recognize that in certain urban, suburban, and rural communities not every teacher is licensed. In an effort to help teachers become fully licensed, the Foundation and NEA agreed to join forces to assist teachers who desire to gain full licensure. The unprecedented program is designed to increase the number of fully-certified minority teachers around the country to strengthen America's teaching force.

During the 2005-2006 school year, the Foundation provided financial assistance and NEA provided technical assistance and expertise to nearly 300 teachers in seven states supporting their participation in coursework and workshops. The program also paid for materials and individual tutoring to help teachers prepare for state licensure examinations.

Today, the partnership is looking to increase the number of participating Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and expand the program to help more teachers obtain full licensure.

Stay tuned for updated information via the *NEA Today* and the NEA website www.nea.org.

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org

Great Public Schools for Every Child

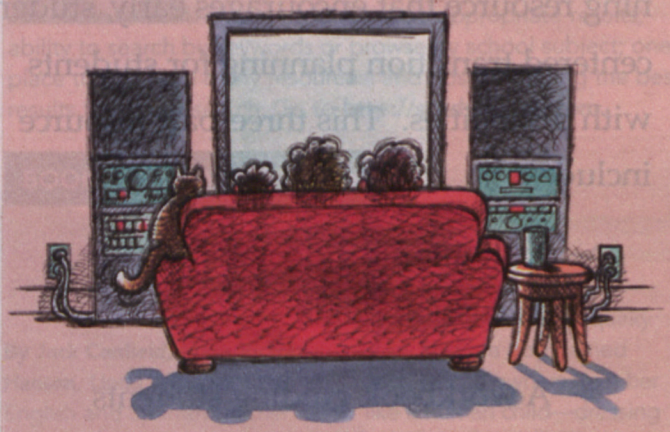
www.nea.org/joyner

Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits

ARE YOU WILLING TO LIVE AT RISK?

YOU'RE WORKING DILIGENTLY to handle today's financial challenges while doing your best to prepare for the future. But think what could happen to your nest egg—or even your home—if you experienced an illness or injury that required extensive at-home care or a lengthy stay in a rehabilitation facility or nursing home.

Since the mid-1990s, NEA long-term care specialists have been working with members like you to assess the risks, costs, and options for obtaining long-term care coverage. The NEA MemberCare® Long-Term Care Insurance Program offers competitive pricing and premium discounts to members, their spouses or domestic partners, parents, and parents-in-law. Protect your assets, your family, and your independence. Call now to discuss your long-term care insurance needs: **(800) 884-2675**.



THE EDUCATOR'S PERFECT GIFT

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, share your love of knowledge with those closest to you—your family and friends. Give a book or audiobook, a CD or DVD, an educational game, or a magazine subscription that is sure to delight them throughout the New Year.

Purchase gifts through the **NEA Bookstore** at **www.neamb.com/discount** and save an additional 5 percent off Barnes & Noble.com's entire inventory; plus NEA members receive fast & free delivery in three business days or less!

The **NEA Magazine Service** offers over 800 titles at up to 85 percent off newsstand prices. Choose from selections covering news, sports, fitness, entertainment, hobbies, family, and education—at the guaranteed lowest introductory price! Visit the Web address above or call **(800) YOURMAG** toll free.

SINCE JANUARY 1, 2001, NEA MEMBERS HAVE SAVED ON OVER 1.1 MILLION MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS FROM THE NEA MAGAZINE SERVICE!

SUPPORT GOVERNORS WHO SUPPORT PUBLIC EDUCATION

Join The NEA Fund today!

"I support The NEA Fund because it supports me. Promises must be kept and that means fully funding and fixing NCLB. I'm supporting The NEA Fund. Together our voices are stronger."

RIC A. HOGERHEIDE
Special Education Teacher
Hamady High School
Flint, Michigan

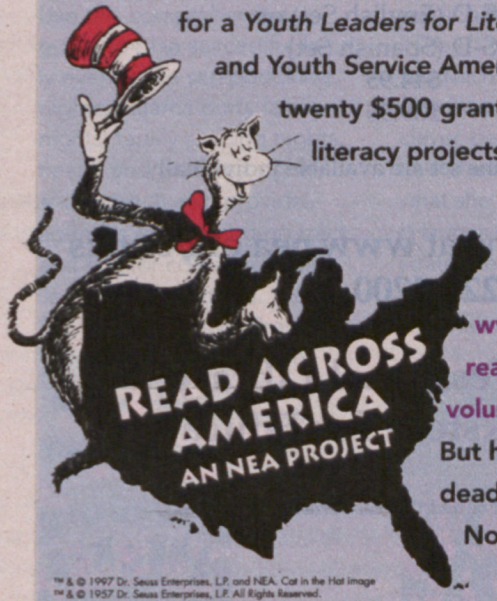
Go to www.neafund.org *and join The NEA Fund today.*

THE NEA FUND
For Children & Public Education
The Political Action Committee of the National Education Association

LET THE CELEBRATION BEGIN!

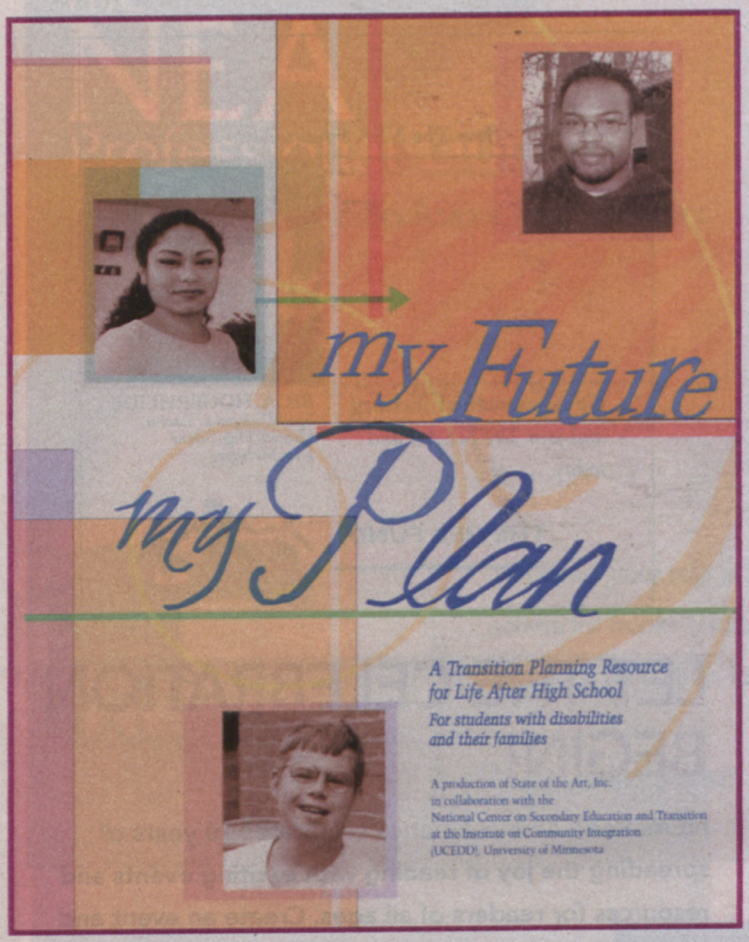
NEA's Read Across America celebrates 10 years of spreading the joy of reading with exciting events and resources for readers of all ages. Create an event and fill out a pledge form. Find out how you can celebrate the 10th anniversary of NEA's Read Across America and the 50th birthday of the Cat in the Hat. Just go to **www.nea.org/readacross**.

Looking for a special reading project to make reading more meaningful to your students? Have them dream up their own literacy project and apply for a *Youth Leaders for Literacy Grant*. NEA and Youth Service America are offering twenty $500 grants for student-led literacy projects. Guidelines and the application are available to download at **www.nea.org/readacross/volunteer**. But hurry—the deadline to apply is November 24.



™ & © 1997 Dr. Seuss Enterprises, L.P. and NEA. Cat in the Hat image ™ & © 1957 Dr. Seuss Enterprises, L.P. All Rights Reserved.

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES


my Future
my Plan
A Transition Planning Resource
for Life After High School
For students with disabilities
and their families
A production of State of the Art, Inc.
in collaboration with the
National Center on Secondary Education and Transition
at the Institute on Community Integration
(UCEDD), University of Minnesota

Available in both English and Spanish, *My Future My Plan* is a "must have" resource for special and general education teachers, families and students.

Published by State of the Art Inc. (2003)

*Item #2028-6-0S-D (English Set) or
*Item #2029-4-0S-D (Spanish Set)
Nonmember: **$44.95**
NEA Member: **$39.95**

*Components of the set are available individually.

Order online at **www.nea.org/books** or call **800-229-4200**.

NEA Professional Library — *THE* Bookstore for Educators!

Shipping charges will be added to each order.

Life doesn't end after high school

But for students with disabilities, planning for that transition can be challenging. Now, students with IEPs are required by law to have a transition plan in place by age 14.

My Future My Plan is a transition planning resource that encourages early, student-centered transition planning for students with disabilities. This three-part resource includes:

- A 30-minute videotape and discussion guide
- A workbook guiding students through every important area of transition planning, including: self-advocacy, legal rights, IEP meetings, health, post-secondary education, employment, adult services, transportation, and others
- A 36-page companion guide to the student workbook with suggestions for teachers and family members on how they can support students in the transition planning process

On the Web

LESSON PLANS FROM THE HISTORY CHANNEL

The History Channel follows up on the success of *Save Our History*—a program that supports community history education and historic preservation efforts—by developing a new series of lesson plans for educators. The plans, which address the National Council for the Social Studies curriculum standards, are available for elementary, middle, and high school levels. November's offering is *Independence and the American Revolution*. Visit **www.saveourhistory.com/educators/monthly_lesson_plans.html** to register for the free materials.

A FREE SEARCH ENGINE JUST FOR HOMEWORK

AOL's StudyBuddy.com is a fun education Web site for students in grades K–12 that features an easy-to-use search engine for homework help in math, language arts, science, social studies, health, and electives. It also has reference tools, fun activities, games, and more. Features include grade-appropriate results; ability to search by keywords or browse by school subject; one place to pull from many resources; and tips for getting the best results from your search. Go to **http://studybuddy.com.**

NEW WEB PORTAL HELPS CONSUMERS UNDERSTAND PERSONAL CREDIT AND IDENTITY THEFT

Use the resources at **www.creditlearningcenter.com** to stay informed about personal credit, credit monitoring, and identity theft. Written and produced by financial reporters, broadcast professionals, and financial educators, this site features free step-by-step help guides, a Consumer Help Center, a Credit Resource Center, a Credit Action Center, and other tools to assist consumers in taking charge of their credit and using it to achieve life goals—like owning a home or car or financing a college education.

CHALLENGE RACISM THROUGH MEDIA AWARENESS

Our friends in Canada have developed two online professional development programs—*Exploring Media & Race* and *Deconstructing Online Hate*—to help educators teach students to think critically about racial representation and hateful information they may encounter on the Internet. Learn how all aspects of media production are created with a purpose, and examine the role that mainstream media plays in shaping perceptions about race. Developed by Media Awareness Network (MNet), the Web site is available in both English and French. Recommended by the Canadian Teachers' Federation. Go to **www.media-awareness.ca.**

BOOKS BY NEA MEMBERS

CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL: STORIES FOR A BETTER WORLD

By Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Linda Williams, et al

English and Spanish teacher Linda Williams is a coauthor of this installment in the famed *Chicken Soup* series, a collection of stories designed to inspire and uplift. Read how the actions and experiences of ordinary people make the world a better place. Conflicts are resolved, forgiveness brings healing, and lives are transformed in this book, which will touch readers' hearts. 400 pp. $12.95 from Health Communications Inc.

To order, go to www.hci-online.com.

THE DOG CHILD

By Simon Black

Children will love this quirky story about a dog named Judy whose owners treat her like a human child—dressing her in clothes, enrolling her in kindergarten, and even throwing her a birthday party complete with cake and candles. The kids love it but the mayor is a skeptic. What does Judy think about all this? How does she deal with the ultimate birthday challenge of blowing out the candles? And what is her birthday wish? PreK–1. 32 pp. $17.95 from Cinco Puntos Press. To order, call (800) 283-3572.

BRIDGING SCHOOL & HOME THROUGH FAMILY NIGHTS: READY-TO-USE PLANS FOR GRADES K–8

By Diane Kyle, Ellen McIntyre, Karen Miller, and Gayle Moore

Looking to close parent-teacher relationship gaps? Use this comprehensive guide to plan successful family events, like scrapbooking nights, pajama party family nights, family reading nights, health and wellness nights, and more. It also provides agendas for keeping on track and tips for contacting families unable to attend. 178 pp. $32.95 from Corwin Press.

Go to www.corwinpress.com.

DON'T BE SILLY, MRS. MILLIE!

By Judy Cox

Mrs. Millie's students know that she's bound to mix up a few words. "Time to write," Mrs. Millie says. "Take out your paper and penguins." Or reading the cafeteria menu: "They have gorilla cheese sandwiches today." Mrs. Millie may be plenty silly—or very clever, because her students love showing that they know what she *really* means. Hilarious illustrations demonstrate the wacky possibilities. Ages 4–8. 28 pp. $14.95 from Marshall Cavendish Children's Books. Go to www.marshallcavendish.us.

PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: GETTY IMAGES, STOCKXCHANGE

DIVERSITY CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER—AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH
This month we honor the unique heritage of our nation's first inhabitants. Visit NEA's new Minority Community Outreach site at www.nea.org/mco/amerindians.html for an overview of the challenges facing American Indian and Alaska Native students.

NOVEMBER 1—ALL SAINTS DAY
Also known as All Hallows or Hallowmas and observed by Roman Catholics and some western Protestant churches, this feast day honors all saints, known and unknown.

NOVEMBER 7—MARIE CURIE'S BIRTHDAY
Formerly Maria Sklodowska, Madame Curie was born in Warsaw, Poland, in 1867. She earned degrees in physics and mathematical sciences in Paris at the Sorbonne, and in 1911 won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for her work with radioactivity.

NOVEMBER 12—ELIZABETH CADY STANTON'S BIRTHDAY
Born in 1815, Cady Stanton was a leader in women's suffrage and instrumental in winning the right to vote for women. Go to www.nps.gov/archive/wori/ecs.htm.

NOVEMBER 20—ANNIVERSARY OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION
On this day in 1910, revolutionary Francisco I. Madero denounced President Porfirio Díaz Mori, declared himself president, and issued the call for a national insurrection.

DECEMBER

DECEMBER 1—BEGINNING OF THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT
Rosa Parks was arrested on this day in 1955 for refusing to give up her bus seat to a White passenger. Led by Martin Luther King Jr., community leaders organized a bus boycott that lasted until 1956, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Alabama's bus segregation laws were unconstitutional.

DECEMBER 1—WORLD AIDS DAY
An opportunity to promote AIDS education, this day is also a time to commemorate those whose lives have been lost or affected by AIDS. For more, see www.worldaidsday.org.

DECEMBER 10—HUMAN RIGHTS DAY
This date marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

DECEMBER 16–23—HANUKKAH
Also known as the Festival of Lights, this eight-day Jewish celebration commemorates the retaking of the Temple in Jerusalem in the 2nd century BCE. In remembrance, Jews light a menorah and eat potato pancakes, called *latkes*.

DECEMBER 25—CHRISTMAS DAY
Historians date Christmas to the year 336, when Christian leaders met to honor the birth of Christ. Celebrated as a religious and secular event, Christmas is marked by church attendance and gift-giving. Most businesses and federal and state governments close.

DECEMBER 26–JANUARY 1—KWANZAA
A unique African-American celebration created in 1966, this seven-day festival reinforces connectedness to African cultural identity and is dedicated to the principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.

Diversity Recipe

AMERICAN INDIAN PUDDING

The historical importance of corn to many tribes cannot be overstated. Northeast Indians introduced English colonists to corn, thereby saving them from starvation. The second governor of Plymouth Colony, William Bradford, is reported to have said, "And sure it was God's good providence that we found this corne, for we know not how else we should have done." There are dozens of regional variations of corn pudding. Here is one your students will enjoy. Serves 8.

Ingredients
2/3 cup yellow cornmeal
4 cups cold whole milk, divided
1/3 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup maple syrup
1/4 cup light molasses
1/4 cup butter
2 eggs, slightly beaten
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. dried ginger
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
1 and 1/2 cups raisins or dried currants*

Preheat oven to 300 degrees and butter a 2-quart casserole. Stir together the cornmeal, salt, and spices. In the top of a double boiler or in a heavy saucepan, heat 3 cups of the milk, the eggs, brown sugar, maple syrup, and molasses until the sugar dissolves. Do not boil. Add the butter and stir. Slowly pour the cornmeal mixture into the milk, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to low and cook 20 minutes or until thickened, stirring occasionally. Fold in the raisins or currants. Spoon pudding into the prepared casserole and pour the remaining cup of cold milk over the top. *Do not stir.* Bake, uncovered, until set, or until the milk has been absorbed and the top is golden brown, about 2 and 1/2 hours. Do not overbake. Serve warm, with ice cream, if desired.

**If you prefer, substitute dried cranberries.*

PHOTO: ROSE ACRE FARMS

FUNDRAISER

WE BUY USED CELL PHONES
& pay up to $50 for each phone!

Some phones have no value. See purchase price list for individual models www.pacebutler.com

THE PERFECT FUNDRAISER

FREE COLLECTION BOXES PROVIDED

1. Collect inactive cell phones.
2. Box cell phone handsets and batteries only. (No accessories, chargers, etc.)
3. Ship FREE (with prepaid label)
4. We will sort the different models and send your check within 4 days!

PaceButler corporation

www.pacebutler.com
800-248-5360 • 405-755-3131

HOLOCAUST SEMINAR

SEMINAR ON HOLOCAUST AND JEWISH RESISTANCE

For application, write:

Jewish Labor Committee
Holocaust Seminar
25 East 21st Street
New York, NY 10010

tel: 212-477-0707
fax: 212-477-1918
web: www.jewishlabor.org

Applications must be received by *April 1, 2007*

Seminar in Poland and Israel for 3 weeks, July 2-23, 2007. This acclaimed seminar is for secondary school teachers who implement Holocaust studies in their classrooms. Our group visits historic sites, hears from prominent scholars, and testimonies of survivors. Teachers pay $2,000 for round-trip travel from New York, all hotels (shared rooms), bus transportation and two meals daily. Sponsored by the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, American Federation of Teachers and the Educators Chapter of the Jewish Labor Committee, with support from the Atran Foundation, the Gruss Life Monument Funds, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

INSURANCE

With the **NEA AD&D Insurance Plan**, you and your entire family can be covered 24/7 no matter where you travel. Plans start at $19 a year. For more information, call 1 (800) 637-4636, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (or Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) ET.

LIFE INSURANCE

Receive up to $300,000 of decreasing term life insurance at affordable group rates with the **NEA Group Term Life Insurance**. New lower rates for you and your spouse. For more information, call 1(800) 637-4636, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (or Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) ET.

MORTGAGE

Get a new mortgage or refinance your existing mortgage through the **NEA Home Financing Program®**. Call today to find out why NEA members rate the program so highly! Also, be sure to ask about the complimentary "NEA Getaway℠" hotel package, a member bonus you'll get after closing on your new mortgage or refinance! For more information, call 1 (800) NEA-4-YOU (1-800-632-4968), Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to midnight (or Saturday 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) ET. Home equity loans and reverse mortgages for seniors are also available.

PERSONAL LOAN

The **NEA Personal Loan®** offers preferred member-only rates with affordable monthly payments. Members can borrow between $3,000 to $25,000, based on creditworthiness. There are no application fees, no pre-payment penalties and no collateral is required. To receive a loan decision in as little as 10 minutes or for more information, call 1 (800) 545-4094, Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. to 10; Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (or Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) ET.

SELF-HELP

Nolo.com—your one stop for legal self-help. Nolo is the leading publisher of self-help legal publications, software and forms. NEA members get a 5% discount on books, forms and software at Nolo.com–that's in addition to the substantial discounts already available on their Website. For more information, visit us at www.neamb.com\discount.

To place a Marketplace advertisement...
Just send in your notice, with appropriate payment, to *NEA Today* Marketplace at the address below.

Rates:
$120 per line; 3 line minimum: Please count 30 characters per line including space and punctuation. Display ads: $800 per column inch. 1/10 page $3,745; 1/5 page $7,085. Deduct 10% if you're an NEA member.

Contact:
NEA Marketing & Promotion
1201 16th Street, N.W., Ste. 517
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 822-7366
adsales@nea.org

TIMESHARES

Timeshares
★ 60-80% off Retail!
Ask for a FREE MAGAZINE and BEST PRICES!
(800) 852-6485
holidaygroup.com/nea

TOURS

WINE LOVERS TOURS '07-VIP tours to South America/Italy/Scotland, brochure (800) 256-0141

WEB SITE

Visit the **NEA Member Benefits Web Site**. Log onto www.neamb.com and discover the power of information at your fingertips. All the latest NEA Member Benefits information is just a click away. You can access program updates, current rates, special offers and announcements, Web Site highlights—and more!

WEB SITE GIVEAWAY

$100 GIFT CARDS

Register to win the NEA Member Benefits Monthly Web Site Giveaway!

Just log onto the NEA Member Benefits Web Site at neamb.com for a chance to win a **$100 GIFT TARGET CARD**.

No purchase necessary.

Giveaway opens 12:00 am, ET, November 1, 2006, and ends 11:59 pm, ET, November 30, 2006.

nea Member Benefits
neamb.com

Don't scold, organize!

To motivate students at the bottom of the social order, help them rise up.

BY AL LEVIE

"Bianca, listen up. Brandon, show some respect. Alex, stop interrupting."

The names may vary, but we all have used those phrases to maintain a learning environment in our classrooms.

As a new White teacher in an urban district, I was continually correcting kids' behavior. And I took it personally. I knew if I had been Black or Latino, I would not have faced the same barriers. Others, perhaps, but not those based on race and social class.

My students are a mix of Black, White, and brown, the vast majority from low-income families. Most are alienated from school, their parents, and each other. On a gut level, they believe they will do no better in life than their parents. These children generally are not engaged in the life of the school. They see the future as a deck stacked against them, with success simply out of reach.

So how do we engage these kids? How do we spark them into buying into education as a way out of poverty?

First, let's stop pretending education is the only road to success. Let's acknowledge that exploitation, racism, and sexism mean there's limited opportunity for many people. And let's recognize that groups of people have lifted themselves out of poverty through collective action.

Am I suggesting that we foment a student revolution? Absolutely not. I am saying, let's engage students on issues that matter, help them organize, and stand with them. In doing so, we will change the dynamics in our schools. We will generate student leaders and engender respect for educators and education.

In the past two years, our Latino and African-American students have been organizing for their rights. A fellow teacher, Ryan Knudson, and I began working with immigrant and Chicano students on immigrant rights. The kids formed a group called Students United for Immigrant Rights. They hold press conferences, write letters and op-ed pieces for the local papers, testify before government bodies, confront political leaders who do not act in their interests, and conduct get-out-the-vote efforts on school funding referenda. They have an impact.

In the process, they have changed. They no longer see themselves as pawns in someone else's game, but as players in the game of life. They have broken down divisions between groups of Latinos and built bridges with poor Black and White kids. They have become great writers, speakers, and thinkers.

Before, they were by and large average to below-average students, but now Latino student achievement has risen, and many of the students have become self-assured leaders. They have also begun to challenge other kids to learn.

Other groups of students and teachers have been sparked by the Latino students' activism. African-American students formed Students United in the Struggle. Their first act was to organize a memorial to Rosa Parks the day after she passed away. Over 300 students, faculty, and community leaders attended. The ceremony got front page headlines in the local paper and catapulted these activists to the forefront of the civil rights community. Also last year, gay and lesbian students formed a gay-straight alliance.

As with the Latinos, the kids involved in these new groups are beginning to feel and act as part of the fabric of our school.

Al Levie says social action leads to classroom engagement.

By engaging students in real-life issues and encouraging them to act on a political level, we will transform schools into places where authentic learning takes place.

At the same time, we will help our students become engines of positive change in our society.

Al Levie teaches social studies in Racine, Wisconsin. See www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/20_01/galv201.shtml for more.

PHOTO TOP: AL LEVIE; BOTTOM: GREGORY SHAVER

FIRST TIME EVER OFFERED!

Life has its ups and downs. Now there's a life insurance plan that doesn't.

Introducing NEW NEA Level Premium Group Term Life.

Finally, a balanced plan with premiums that won't rise* and benefits that won't fall.

It's never been easier to get coverage at low NEA group rates with no medical exam. You and your spouse are eligible for up to $100,000 of coverage. And, you can choose the term that's in sync with your budget, either 10 or 20 years.**

Seesaws are for kids, not insurance policies. So choose NEA Level Premium Group Term Life and get some peace of mind at rates that won't break the family piggy bank.

Go to neamb.com/newlp to see your new, low rate today.

For additional questions, call **1-800-637-4636**

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Sat., 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) ET. Spanish speaking representatives are available.

NEA Members Insurance Trust®

This solicitation may not be available to residents of MS and WV. For more information, call 1-800-637-4636.

*Rates may change if plan experience requires a change for all insureds.

**Members/spouse who elect a 20-year term must be under age 56. Members/spouse who elect a 10-year term must be under age 61.

NEA Level Premium Group Term Life Insurance is issued by The Prudential Insurance Company of America, 751 Broad Street, Newark, New Jersey 07102. Please refer to the Booklet-Certificate, which is made a part of the Group Contract, for all plan details, including any exclusions, limitations and restrictions which may apply. If there is a discrepancy between this document and the Booklet-Certificate/Group Contract issued by Prudential, the terms of the Group Contract will govern. Contract Series 83500.

IFS-A123135 Ed. 8/06

LPNT1106

NEW

8.25% APR†
one of the lowest variable rates anywhere

0% introductory APR† for 12 billing cycles on cash advance checks and balance transfers (subject to a 3% transaction fee, no less than $5)

No annual fee

No balance transfer fees for balance transfers requested with application

INTRODUCING the NEA RateSmart℠ Credit Card.

Now you could save with one of the lowest rates anywhere.

This exclusive card has been designed to give you the lowest rates available. With other credit cards you may be paying Annual Percentage Rates from 10% to 20%. Our 8.25% variable annual percentage rate (APR)† on purchases can help you cut your interest payments in half, saving you money every month. It also features no annual fee, 0% introductory APR for 12 billing cycles on cash advance checks and balance transfers, no balance transfer fees for balance transfers requested when applying and more.

For one of the lowest rates available, apply today.
Call 1-888-758-7946
(TTY users: 1-800-833-6262) and mention priority code FAAHUM.

nea Member Benefits
neamb.com

Bank of America

†The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for Purchases, Balance Transfers, and Cash Advance Checks is a variable rate, currently 8.25% for NEA RateSmart accounts, or 18.24% for NEA School Days accounts. The account you receive will be determined based on your creditworthiness. The APR for Bank and ATM Cash Advances is a variable rate, currently 19.99% for both NEA RateSmart and NEA School Days accounts. The current Introductory APR for Balance Transfers and Cash Advance Checks is 0% through your first 12 statement Closing Dates. Transaction fee for Bank and ATM Cash Advances, and for purchases of wire transfers and other cash equivalents is 3% (min. $5). Transaction fee for Balance Transfers and Cash Advance Checks is 3% (min. $5, max. $125). Transaction fee for any transaction made in a foreign currency: 1% of the U.S. Dollar amount of each such transaction. We reserve the right to change the Variable APRs in our discretion, including, for example, the margins. If your account has balances that are subject to different APRs, your payments are applied to the balance with the lowest APR before any payments are applied to balances with higher APRs. This means that balances with higher APRs are not reduced until balances with lower APRs have been paid off. For more information about the rates, fees, other costs, and benefits associated with the use of these credit cards, call the telephone number appearing above. This credit card program is issued and administered by FIA Card Services, N.A. MasterCard is a federally registered service mark of MasterCard International Inc., and is used by the issuer pursuant to license.
©2006 Bank of America Corporation

CCNT1106